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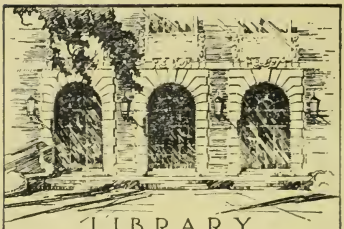

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THE

EXILE OF ERIN.

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THE

EXILE OF ERIN,

A NOVEL,

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY MRS. PLUNKETT,

LATE MISS GUNNING.

"Did I but purpose to embark with thee,
"On the smooth surface of a summer's sea,
"When gentle zephyrs fann'd its prosperous gales,
"And fortune's favor fill'd the swelling sails,
"But would forsake the bark, and make the shore,
"When the wind whistles, and the tempests roar.
"Husband, oh, no! one sacred oath has ty'd,
"Our lives one destiny, our loves one guide;
"Nor wild, nor deep, our common way divide."

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THE

EXILE OF ERIN.

LETTER I.

The Marchioness of Desmond to Lady Cecilia Darcey.

BE under no apprehensions, child, I am not so angry at your wise letter, this moment put into my hands, as not to honour your sage lectures with a

reply, though, to say the truth, they would have come better from that detestible formal bit of old-fashioned propriety, Lady Mary Colbura, than from you, my pretty grave sister. And so I am absolutely spoiled since my marriage!—very free and easy indeed!—but I see you do not stand on ceremony; and as that is entirely out of fashion I have no more to say, as all the world allow I am as modern a fine lady as any in London. Why, my dear simple Cecilia, I absolutely rival the delightful Lady Aberdon! Do you not feel astonished at my wondrous improvements? only six months in dear London, and already a belle of the first magnitude; not the smallest remains of my country rusticity; you say you scarcely know me to be the same person; how de-

lightful!—No, as you mention, Olivia Darcey was quite a different creature from Lady Desmond; she, with all her vivacity, was modest, blushing, and unaffected; but your simple sister is now gay, spirited, assured, and embellished with all the airs and graces of the beau monde. My stars! I wonder you are not in raptures at the delightful change! It cost me a little trouble to eradicate some aukward sentiments—the prejudice of education: For example, I used to have a great deal of foolish sensibility—used to feel for the sufferings of others—felt the influence of affection, friendship, charity, joy, sorrow, and I do not know what; in short, all my passions were tremblingly

alive. Heavens! what an unfortunate state! And how could a modern woman of fashion live, if her whole unlimited affection was not centered in herself?—she who is flattered, admired, surrounded by all the fine men in town, who swear they are expiring for love of her! What would become of her were she capable of pity? Don't you, my pretty demure Cecelia, plainly see her peril? And then were she to indulge her propensity to friendship, what would be the consequence? Under that specious name she is surrounded by enemies, who would not fail to take advantage of her weakness; how fortunate then do I think myself to have acquired on my first entree into the world, such a friend

and confidante as my dearest Lady Berresford; don't be angry, for I can plainly perceive she is not a favourite with mama or your wise little ladyship; however I cannot help that; I doat on her; she is so agreeable, so lively, in short so delightfulul a companion in every way, that I regard her as a most valuable acquisition to my circle of intimates; then she thinks in every respect so exactly like myself; she doats on all those I love, and turns those I dislike into the most delightful ridicule imaginable; so pray say nothing against her, for I cannot bear to hear any thing unpleasant of those I regard; and it would be a little hard indeed, if any body was to dictate to a married woman in the choice of her friends; no, my

dear, I would not suffer even Desmond to breathe a whisper in my ear injurious to this good fascinating woman; no, I would positively have come to my mother's this evening, according to the wish expressed in your sermon, for I will not call it letter, but that I had promised Lady Berresford and a party of girls, to go with them to the masquerade, and therefore I must defer my personal congratulations on the intended marriage of Avenmore and the pretty Rossanna; I confess I am a little surprised at the connection my dear eccentric brother is about to make, but if it is his will have nothing more to say than to wish them happy with all my heart; indeed I believe she is better calculated to be the

the daughter-in-law of our good mother than one of those elegant girls of fashion one meets every where, who are taught from infancy to disguise, nay, absolutely to get the better of their feelings, who in every thing substitute art for nature, who are wholly governed by fashion, who laugh at a tragedy, and look grave at a comedy, who carress the people they hate, torment the men they like best, marry the man they loath and dispise most, and love only themselves; such is the state of affairs in this gay town, and from my sketch of it you may judge what an amazing change must have taken place 'ere I arrived at my present state of perfection.

Adieu, my dear, if I have time, per-

haps I may look in on you before I go to Argyle-Street, though I shall not be able to stay ten minutes; perhaps you girls would like to be of my party, if you would and could get mama's consent to go to so wicked a place as a masquerade, come to me at twelve o'clock, either as gipsies, flower girls, ballad singers, nuns, house maids, or what you please; I mean to be a fortune-teller, in order to plague some of my acquaintance; I hope I shall support my character well, though I am a little out of spirits to-day, heavy, stupid, and drowsy; I did not sleep an hour the whole night, and had a lecture too, the first my lord ever took the liberty to read me, but I have given him to understand,

stand, though the sweetest tempered creature in the world, I will not bear contradiction or advice; the former his own indulgence has taught me to dislike, and the latter, I am sure I do not need, being perfectly competent to be the judge of my own actions; but you shall hear; amongst all the necessary qualifications to the composition of a fine lady, gaming has been that to which I felt the most aversion; but a childish dislike was not to stop my repugnance—a laudable ambition made me surmount this and several other difficulties; I shall, however, never be an adept in this fashionable system; but I put the best face I can on my want of skill, and as others are gainers by it they are too polite to rally me on the

subject; on the contrary, Lady Berresford, who never says an unkind thing, puts me in humour with myself, since she declares I am a very apt scholar, that it gives her infinite pleasure to play with me, that I really finesse very prettily, and understand the rules of the game, and above all, that no creature breathing loses money with so good a grace: When I first began to play I had the greatest difficulty on earth to keep myself awake—I yawned immoderately—lost like the deuce—and about three o'clock in the morning found myself in my chair—my head aching violently—my senses bewildered with great and little casino—aces, spades, and cards ringing in my ears.

On

On entering my dressing-room I went up to my glass, yawned, stretched, rubbed my eyes, and seeing what a jaded countenance I had brought home with me, exclaimed, as if addressing my maid, "Heavens, what a figure!"

"I hope then, my love, you begin to see the consequence of such constant late hours," said a voice behind me—I started—and turning round, who should I see but the Marquis, stuck up in an armed chair, with a book in his hand, for you must know it is some time since we have left off going about together; your ignorance of fashionable customs makes it necessary I should explain that few women, that is to say few women of rank, ever appear with

their husbands, or if by any chance they do so, they take no more notice of each other than if they were absolute strangers; fondness between married people is the most ridiculous thing in nature, since the heart has seldom the least connection in the union; girls now marry to be their own mistresses, to encrease their rank or fortune, in short, to be at liberty to follow their own inclinations without controul; to be admired, followed, flattered, courted, for the poor neglected spinsters have no chance with the married dashing women of fashion? if they are great heiresses they may perhaps get husbands, but single, they must not pretend to vie with us wives in admiration: Now-a-days only

only married women are followed; the men find it both the cheapest and most agreeable way to amuse themselves where they are in no danger of losing their freedom, and at the expence of those they term friends; at first, I could not bear to go out without Desmond, because he was, and to say the truth, still does admire me, I believe, more than any other person in the world, and I take care to keep up that attention he delights to pay me, in order to make myself an object of envy to other women of my acquaintance, who do not possess the same degree of influence with myself. But to return to my saucy husband, who is almost spoiled by indulgence, however I must change

my

my plans, and convince him I have a dash of spirit in my composition, which cannot brook controul; and for this reason I replied to his observation on late hours—"Sitting up is a sad thing indeed," yawning as I spoke; "I wonder my lord you will set me such an example" smiling with the greatest condescension, and at the same time patting his cheek; but I saw for the first time, the testy soul was not in the humour to be joked with;—he gave his chair a push to avoid my touch.

"I find," said he, with a mighty stately air, "your ladyship is determined to have your own way in every point, however prejudicial and absurd your whims may be; but you are your own

own mistress, madam—I wish not to controul you—and if you do not endeavour to do what is agreeable to me from motives of affection, I scorn to exert that authority which nature and custom———"

"Hey-day! my lord, surely you are in a dream!—authority indeed!—a very pompous expression upon my word," interrupted I.

"Your ladyship may be well startled at it, since I now begin to believe, unfortunately for us both, since your marriage with me, you have been but too little accustomed to feel it."

Some of my old-fashioned notions

tions of love, gratitude, and duty, to this generous, best of husband's, for such, though I am very angry at his daring to dispute my will, I am sure he is, at this moment struck my heart, and my cheeks were wetted with my tears, at beholding him for the first time in his life, look at his idol with a frown, and throwing my silly arms about him, I sobbed on his dear affectionate bosom, as I softly whispered, "I hope my lord it is not too late to please you; you do not know what a meek creature I sometimes am; I confess I am indeed spoilt, owing to your having made such a pet of me, and am apt to forget you are my lord and master; but," added I, resuming my own new acquired character, which

for

for a moment had deserted me, "it will ever be more delightful to me to consider you as my friend and husband; but husband, do I say?—oh, monstrous!—does not that tremendous name signify only the former, and that is the character I fear your lordship now intends to play: Well then, to show you how well I can act my part, you shall see me all submission and obedience, but you may depend *not all love.* You I am sorry to say, have forgot some of your promises on a certain occasion, but you see I have not; I remember I did say obey, though your promise to love I find, alas! has escaped your memory."

"Ah, my Olivia, I sometimes almost think

think happy would it be for me if I could do so; it must be owned you have lately spared no pains to procure me that happiness; oh, my best beloved, you may one day be sensible, when it is too late, that my heart deserved to be a little more valued; yet why do I say so?" said the kind, patient man; "alas! I fear it was never prized sufficiently; even your mother observes with concern, the change the world has made in the beloved of all our hearts; and neither can I, indulgent as I am to your every fault, be the only careless observer where my happiness is so deeply at stake."

"Did ever mortal hear such a lecture!"

ture!" cried I; "and for what I wonder! Would not any body think I had been guilty of God knows what mighty crime, when I have only been mixing in the world, amusing myself in the best and most fashionable company, and in the most harmless manner imaginable; and where I met every body of rank and fashion in town to countenance my example; married women too!—some of them paragons of wives as *times* go," added I, smiling; "and here I am come home monstrous early, for it is only four o'clock, vexed to death at my run of ill-luck, and intending to pour all my complaints into thy sympathizing bosom, which *till now* was never callous to its Olivia, and to tell you how sick,

sick, how half-asleep I am. When behold, for the first time, you instead of flying to me with open arms, as of course I always expect, receive me with all the stately airs of a sovereign; and, instead of endeavouring to console me, begins a wise lecture, intermixed with mournful ohs, and moans, and the lord knows what."—I made all this speech with the archest look and accent imaginable; and when I had done flung my arms about his neck, though I am sorry to be obliged to confess he was, notwithstanding all my sweet condescension, a little refractory. "Now," continued I, "resume your sage lecture, and be angry with me if you can; this," laying my cheek to his "is the only method

method I shall take this time to punish your lordship for daring to be cross to your Olivia; but if ever you venture to rebel again against my sovereign authority you now know what you have to expect."

"Thou dear, irresistible, tormenting girl," cried he, throwing his arms round me; "you too well know your power, but for heaven's sake let us be as happy as we were at the commencement of our union, but you now trifle both with your own and my peace of mind, and much I fear that hurried away by the prevailing torrent of fashion and dissipation, your heart will 'ere long grow callous to every amiable sensation, with which, under the care of the

the best, the most affectionate of mothers, it has been so amply stored; and that shortly my fascinating Olivia will lose that sweet sensibility which is the peculiar characteristic of her sex; oh, no, my best, my dearest girl, let me not lose my once lovely, gentle, tender, insinuating wife in that, to me a despicable character, a modern fine lady."

"Well, your lordship has, it must be confessed, a most unaccountable taste," said I, "for a man of fashion, if you can prefer an innocent girl, just taken from the wing of her mother, and without one acquired grace to decorate her, but possessing anair of stupid simplicity, and the blush of modesty continually rising to destroy every pretension to the

manners

manners of fashionable life, to the character of a spirited woman of quality, which is so universally admired and aspired to; this indeed my lord is a poor return for my unwearied pains to polish myself, and to render myself, by my present graceful and fashionable airs, more worthy to support the character of your wife.".

"Believe me, my love," returned my solemn lord and master, "I have seen so much to reprove in the conduct of the married women of the present day, that I should have remained single to the hour of my death rather than have risked my honour, my happiness, in their keeping; it was the pious, the virtuous education of the fair daughters of

of the excellent Countess of Avenmore had received which even more than their personal attractions induced me to form a matrimonial alliance, which for years I had avoided. Dearest Olivia," added he, fondly pressing me to a heart, which, to do him justice, is as generous a one as ever beat in the breast of man, "return, I conjure you, to your former self; be the *daughter*, *sister*, *wife*, and *friend*, you have formerly been, and restore your adoring husband to that degree of felicity your late unthinking conduct has almost destroyed."

"My conduct, my lord!" and I started from him, and my half-closed eyes

eyes emitted sparks of my offended dignity, which was wounded at being treated so like a child, to be thus chid for a supposed offence! "Good heavens, dare any one censure it? But I now, too late, alas! perceive that any endeavour of mine to please you would be a fruitless attempt, since your mind is thus prejudiced by the enemies of my happiness against me; but be assured my lord, I shall never give myself the trouble to change it till *my* own heart, *not the caprice of my family*, tells me it is faulty."

I rang the bell for my woman, then walked up and down the room in a good deal of agitation, for I was really vexed,

fatigued, and out of spirits; my provoking Lord now took not the least pains to bring me into humour again, nay he seemed inclined to let me make my exit without condescending to attempt a reconciliation, and you may believe I too well knew my own dignity easily to make the first advances, so coldly wishing him a good night, I withdrew to my room; and when we met again I suppose his conscience had upbraided him for his former presumption, for he was again the fond, the tender husband, who lives but in my smiles. I, between jest and earnest, remonstrated at the late unkindness of his conduct; and affectionately kissing me, he said, "You find I must do whatever you re-

require; whether you fail on your part or not, I ought not to let you know the power you have over me, but if you have the least generosity you will not abuse my easy fondness; I would not for worlds again endure the uneasiness I have just experienced; this has been our first difference, for heaven's sake, my life, my soul, let it be the last."

I promised to do every thing he wished, provided he was only guided respecting me by his own observations, and not biassed by the advice of any person whatever; this he has promised, and I am all sweetness and condescension, he all admiration, love, and rapture; and now who will say I do not

know how to manage my husband—Cecilia, let me alone for that. Why, with all his superior sense, learning, judgment, and long experience of the world, I can wind him round my finger. But notwithstanding this triumph of mine, I feel to-day feverish, low-spirited, fretful, and what is worst of all, and perhaps the principal cause of the latter, I look like a witch; so that I have ordered myself to be denied to every body except Lady Berresford, who can by her charming conversation, banish every unpleasant idea; and shall set the whole morning moping at home, that I may a little recruit my spirits, and, if possible, by the evening restore my complexion to its native lustre. Least it should be injured by too much scribbling, I shall

now release you, since I am absolutely dead and buried with fatigue; but the pleasure of the night, I trust, will restore me to myself. Till we meet,

Your's affectionately,

OLIVIA DESMOND.

LETTER II.

Rossanna to her Mother.

TEACH me, my dearest mother to meet with humility and gratitude the blessings which are heaped on your undeserving child. Oh, my beloved, my elegant, amiable brother, scarcely does my heart feel its own weight of happiness more then it is sus-

susceptible of the good fortune which awaits you, through the kind consideration of that most excellent of men, who your honoured, transendently honoured girl, is permitted to consider in the tender light of husband, protector, friend ; joy, joy, my darling mother, all apprehension for the future fate of your grateful children is now ended, since God has pleased to bless them so much above your highest expectation. This day Lord Avenmore has procured a situation for my brother which would not have disgraced himself to have accepted ; when in the most delicate and the most tender manner he informed me of the promotion of my Francis, he said it was only he trusted the fore-

runner of more, far more delightful intelligence (alluding to the restoration of my dear exiled father) I felt towards him sentiments of love, gratitude, and veneration, which words are inadequate to express—I felt my powers unequal to the contest; my emotions would scarcely allow me to whisper, "Oh, my lord, you know not how dear this adored father, this charming brother, are to your thrice happy Rossanna; *never never* will she forget this kind, this inexpressible obligation, but her whole life shall be spent in endeavouring to repay the obligation you thus heap on her."

My brother was present, and Lord Avenmore turning to him, exclaimed, "Tell me, my dear Portland, when

I thus behold the treasure you will in a few days commit to my keeping, can I ever do enough for those she loves, in whose speaking face is painted the generous charming emotions of her soul; believe me, my sweetest Rossanna, I am truly sensible of all you value, and if the most tender indulgence, the most doating fondness, and unremitted study to gratify its every wish can secure the possession of it, the man who shortly hopes to be received by the family you have taught him to love and venerate as his own, will never be deprived of that blessing."

"And if this beloved, this darling sister," cried my energetic Francis, "is not the most grateful the most affec-

tionate of wives, I renounce her for ever."

I hid my blushingface on his shoulder, as I whispering said, "no great fear my loved brother will renounce me on *that* account."

I will not attempt to repeat all the kind expressions uttered by this disinterested man, who will shortly be the arbitrator of my fate; suffice it to say, he assured us both that our beloved parent would shortly be recalled, that a change of administration would immediately take place, that Lord Desmond was to fill the post of Secretary of State for the home department, and

and that he himself had been solicited to take on him the high situation of Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, an office he added he would not certainly reject, since it would afford his Rossanna a triumph in knowing it would then be in her power greatly to reward the friends of her adversity, and, at the same time, treat those who had been accessary to her unhappiness, in the manner their conduct had deserved. I could only look my gratitude.

In four months, my dearest lord informs me I may expect to embrace my father; your presence, dearest best of parents, is only wanting to complete the felicity of your Rossanna, who is only reconciled to your unavoidable

bsence by the delightful certainty that we shall be shortly re-united in dear Ireland, happy, far more happy, than when the foes of my darling father *drove us poor exiles* from its beloved, its hospitable shores. Ah, my dearest mother, how has the hand of Providence guided your happy children, who on their own account have no claim to such an interposition; no, it is the virtues of my adored, revered parents, which have drawn down a blessing from heaven in favour of their children; the lesson you from childhood have taught us is, that a firm trust in the Almighty naturally produces patience, chearfulness, and all other dispositions of mind that alleviate those calamities which

which we are not able to remove in the exalted situation to which the affection of the best, the most exalted of his sex, is about to raise me; I trust, I shall retain that humility which is the true proof of christian virtues; without it we retain all our faults, and they are only covered over with pride, that conceals them from others, and often from ourselves; while they who possess that quality make themselves more amiable to their friends, and respected even by their enemies, since it ever attracts benevolence and demands approbation. Oh, my dearest, most beloved of parents, why is it you refuse to sanction with your presence the most important, the most solemn act of your Rossanna's life;

life; were you by me I should feel a greater confidence in myself, but you say in your reply to Lord Avenmore's letter, soliciting your presence, that in the present state of affairs it would be imprudent to leave your home, nothing would reconcile me to this determination but the delightful certainty that a short time will restore me to your maternal arms, changed in nothing, I fondly hope, but in the honoured name and exalted situation to which the disinterested tenderness of the best of men is about to raise your happy thrice-happy daughter; for why, my dearest mother, should I seek to hide from your knowledge that had Lord Avenmore been on an equality with your humble girl,

girl, he would have been the chosen object of her heart's best love; an affection stole on me from the first moment of my acquaintance with his noble generous character, but never had I the presumption to raise my hopes so high till solicited by himself to bestow a heart I had already given unasked; his mother, to that disinterested, most generous of women, sanctioned his addresses with unequivocal approbation, and every part of his family treat me with the same marks of distinction, as the intended bride of Avenmore, as if I had been in a situation in life equal to his own; ought it not to be the study of my future life to deserve such unmerited good fortune?

My

My lord enters;—he knows I am addressing the best the most beloved of mothers, and insists on taking the pen from me to speak the generous sentiments of his own affectionate noble heart.

The Earl of Avenmore writes.

Oh, filial affection, how amiable art thou! never, I believe were mother and child more firmly united by the endearing bonds of unity and love, and I have always been convinced that a *good daughter* and a kind sister, can never make a bad wife.

Do you know, my dearest madam, from

from my first introduction to our lovely Rossanna, I determined, if possible, to make her mine; I had been disgusted with the affectation of modern misses, and had determined, whenever I did change my situation, the woman I would make my wife should be unaccustomed to luxury and dissipation, one whom I hoped to bind to me not only by matrimonial vows, but by the more endearing ties of affection; yes, it was the gentle unassuming creature, it has been my good fortune to secure, whose artless heart is above all price, to whom I had determined to resign my liberty; one who will regard me as her friend as well as husband, whose genuine unaffected vivacity, unallied with caprice or affected airs, will sweetly tem-

per the natural impetuosity of your s n elect; then why does my Rossanna say, what she terms her good-fortune, is unmerited?—No, my love, your beauty and sweetness is worthy of a prince; and I shall ever think the obligation on my side.

Had you beheld your daughter last night, my dearest madam, you would have said I ought indeed to be most vain of such a treasure; it was the first time our intended marriage had been made public; the ball was given by my sister in honour of the occasion, and Miss Portland introduced to my family and connections as my destined bride; she has been seen but little, my mother leading rather a retired life, nor does she

she think it necessary to drag the young people under her protection from one place of public amusement to another, the beautiful countenance of your Rossanna was therefore a stranger to numbers; her dress was elegant, yet what need has she for the superfluous ornaments of dress; health, innocence, and peace, gave a bloom to her cheek, which art could never equal, and the animated lustre of her eye proclaimed the felicity which reigned within her lovely bosom.

"Who is that charming girl?" was whispered by many an admiring stranger, as I proudly led my beauteous prize to the Marchioness of Desmond; "she is my own, my betrothed Rossanna,"

sanna," exultingly replied my heart; "and I would not exchange my situation with any man in existence."

And now permit me once more to express my acknowledgements to you, my dearest madam, for the treasure you consent to commit to my keeping; be convinced of my eternal gratitude; believe me when I say in the Countess of Avenmore you will ever find a child as fond, as dutiful, and as respectful as has been your own Rossanna, whose happy husband will study to restore a persecuted parent to the arms of his family, for till that is finally accomplished I know the happiness of my charmer will be incomplete, till this adored father is re-united to you; every thing

thing is in train; letters of recall, and a full pardon, will be forwarded in a few days to America, and in the course of four months I trust in person to thank you *both together* for the blessing I shall possess in your angel daughter, who regrets, more than words can express, that you are not the witness of our nuptials, which are to take place as soon as the tedious forms of law will permit; I harrass them so constantly that I believe all will be settled in the course of another week; we shall then leave town for a few days, and on my return every preparation will be made for our departure for Ireland, where we hope to embrace *our* beloved mother, in health, and happy in the certainty that the object

ject of all her hopes and fears is now far superior to the malice of his enemies, nor do I think I could wish them a greater mortification than they will receive in beholding the daughter of the *persecuted exile* filling the first situation in that country from which *private pique* and the horrors of rebellion had driven her beloved parent, and deluged there fertile lands with the best native blood of a brave, liberal, though in some instances a misguided people; that every *religious prejudice*, every *national animosity*, every *faction* of party may one day be done away is my my most ardent wish; then indeed will the heart of every *true* friend to his country be gratified by the freedom and security of those social blessings, secured by obedience to those laws

laws which gives hereditary freedom, and pours from the cornucopia of commerce, wealth and power on the United Kingdoms.

In the present high office which I am now called on to fulfill, I trust to be able to administer my task, arduous as it is, with mildness and justice, since the noblest character in life, is that of a true patriot, he will admit there is honest men though not of his *own persuasion*, and that honest men *may differ*, since were all of one party the country would thrive but ill; it is true, factious men not only impose upon others, but are apt to mistake themselves for patriots, whereas, in my opinion, the first and chieftest part of a real patriot is to overlook wrongs, and endeavour by

mildness to convince others that they err; however, I believe, whilst there are great posts in the nation, and great men to fill them, patriots *either real* or *seeming*, never will be wanting; but the difference of the pretended character is this, the one talks of the *public* but *means* himself, while the noble mind of the true patriot is the firm friend of his king and country, and prefers their interest and that of the public to every other consideration; as an illustration of this fact, Rutilius, an illustrious Roman, who was banished by Sylla, being told there would ere long be a civil war, which would bring all the banished men home again, exclaimed, "God forbid! for I had rather my country should blush for my banish

banishment than mourn for my return."

I am a young politician, yet it is a subject which has long occupied my feelings, and I have accepted the offer of going to Ireland, in the idea that a mild and just authority may be administered with effect over a brave, a just, and a liberal people. I go on the express terms of being unfettered in my authority; my wish is to conciliate all parties, and to do away any uncharitable prejudice, since truth and reason often get the better of authority in particular minds, but truth and reason with authority on their side will carry numbers, bear down prejudices, and become the very genius of a people;

zeal to our own religion does well in a private breast, but moderation in a public state. Most parties blame persecution when they feel the smart of it, and most practise it when they have the rod in their own hands; that my humble endeavours may be crowned with the blessed effect of bringing about a happy understanding between countries so closely united, is my most earnest wish, and it shall be my most indefatigable endeavour to accomplish; and while I am attending to affairs of state, my generous minded Rossanna will, by acts of condescending kindness to all, even to those who formerly would have injured those dearer to her than life, convince them that the best art we can use to conquer, and be revenged of our enemies, is to do them

them all the good we can, since there is not any revenge more heroic than that which torments envy by doing good; in troubled water you can scarcely see your face, or see it very little, until the water be quiet and still; so in troubled times you can see but little truth, or trust to the sincerity of friends; when times are quiet and settled then truth appears, and friends may be justly appreciated by adversity, since it is the touchstone of friendship; prosperity gains, adversity tries them.

In looking back on what I have written, I find my postscript is more like a state paper than a letter expressive of my approaching happiness; but, I trust,

LIBRARY

through the intercession of our most beloved Rossanna, you, my dear madam, will forgive this intrusion on your time, while I hasten to relieve you by subscribing myself,

Your respectful and devoted,

AVENMORE.

Rossanna writes,

SURELY, my dearest mother, the head of your Rossanna will be turned by this tide of happiness which rolls in upon her; fortune, tired of persecuting us, is now making ample recompence for all our trials; ought we not to trust her as we do health?—enjoy her smiles, bear with her ills, and never apply violent remedies but

but when necessity calls for them; I have now only to pray that God may endue me with strength to bear my happy prospects with moderation and humility, since it ought to be the ornament of a high station.

I can scarcely describe the splendour of the preparations making for a certain occasion, which the situation my lord is about to fill renders necessary: A long minority, and the care of the best of mothers, has rendered him a rich man; and as his generosity is equal to his powers, our future establishment is to be on the first scale of magnificence; I need not say the settlement he makes on your undeserving Rossanna is equal to what he

would have done on a woman of equal rank and fortune with himself; the family jewels which the amiable countess insists on resigning to Lord Avenmore on his marriage are magnificent; but not content with these, her noble-minded son has given orders for additional ones to an immense amount; and can all these splendid decorations, I often, in the course of the day, ask my heart, be indeed intended for the little simple wild Irish girl, who but a short time since was at best but an object of pity to those who were susceptible of the feelings of humanity, and has often encountered the proud look of arrogant superiority from those who pretended to feel for the situation of her dear exiled parent. Oh, my mother, had old age, desease, decrepitude,

tude, courted me, on the terms of restoring him to his family, relieving him from a life of banishment, my heart would have had courage to sacrifice its own happiness, its dearest expectations for his advantage, but now, that it has pleased God to make Lord Avenmore the instrument of his restoration to us; surely a life spent in gratitude and endeavours to render him happy will be too short to repay the vast debt of gratitude I owe the Countess, that dear generous woman, who receives as a daughter, to her maternal arms that portionless girl, who has no other riches than what she possesses in the affection of her family, and the disinterested love of the best and most noble of his sex. Cecilia too already calls me the beloved

wife of her darling brother, and the sister of her heart's election: She is all gentleness, sweetness, and affability; would I could with justice say the lovely Marchioness of Desmond was the same fascinating creature as when I first beheld her on my arrival at Avenmore Abbey, but her error has been a want of proper caution to the society with whom she now associates; remonstrances are of no avail—the more she is cautioned against the person she makes her constant companion, and bosom friend, the more obstinate she is in her error, though it is next to impossible but she must observe, as well as the Marquis, the slights Lady Berresford meets from those who formerly knew her; and, indeed, at this moment,

no-

nothing but the high-hand with which the marchioness carries all before her, could gain her favourite an entrance into the houses of many persons, who rather than not be on the visiting list of Lady Desmond, condescends to receive her friend. I am sorry to observe this obstinacy on the part of her ladyship, is a cause of great uneasiness to her family. Lady Avenmore is the best of mothers, and from her own knowledge of the world, and the unbounded affection she bears her children, she is best qualified to advise her giddy unthinking daughter, but it is with grief I observe her presence is shunned, and her excellent precepts neglected by this misled young creature, who before her marriage dwelt with the

most tender fondness on every sentence uttered by this truly amiable woman; a degree of coolness, I am sorry to say, is the consequence, and the family now seldom meet, as Lady Avenmore has expressed both to the Marquis and her daughter, the dislike she has to the character of some of her associates; indeed, I believe it is only in conformity to the rules of the world she ever calls in Grosvenor-Square, and the countess declines all invitations to the house of her still fondly loved Olivia, till she shall have quitted the associates so unfit for her youth and inexperience, and that I fear it will take some time to accomplish, since the more opposition she receives the more she appears determined to rebel;

bel: Her lord is of that easy pliant disposition, and doats with such fondness on his beautiful wife that she leads which ever way she pleases; but, I trust she will ere long forgot her modish follies, and again put herself under the guidance of simple unaffected nature; her virtues, her benevolence, which by bad example and continual dissipation, now lay dormant, will again expand themselves, and she will once more be the beloved and affectionate creature she once was.

Adieu, my tender, beloved mother; this, perhaps, will be the last letter you will receive from your Rossanna Portland, but no name will make

make me less the dutiful and affectionate child of the best and most tender of mothers.

LETTER

LETTER III.

Francis Portland, Esq. to Captain Glenmorgan.

SURELY, my dear friend, however artifice may labour to conceal it, ambition is predominate in every heart; this imperious passion has universal sway, and never did my heart so fully feel this truth as at the moment; every

every wish my most ambitious fancy could aspire to, was crowned in the union of my darling sister with a man so every way deserving as Lord Avenmore.

Last night the ceremony which I doubt not, will secure her happiness for life, was performed by the worthy Mr. Osborn, his lordship's domestic chaplain, in the presence of the family, all of whom congratulated my sweet unassuming sister in the most flattering terms.

The new married pair are gone to a seat of the Marquis of Desmond's for a few days, where the family are to join them; and after passing a few weeks in the neighbourhood of Windsor, they come to town previous to their departure for

for Ireland, a period to which Rossanna looks forward with the greatest impatience, since it will restore her to the arms of the most beloved of mothers—my father too!—what will be the transports of his heart when informed of the surprising exaltation of his modest blushing girl?—For my own part, I am nearly overcome by my sensations, and my vanity almost gets the better of my reason, when I reflect on the splendid turn our affairs have taken; ambition is a passion I believe, to which poor human nature is liable; it sits on the throne of kings, and on the hermit's bench; it cabals, prays, pleads, harangues, in the senate, and frequents the haunts of dissipation; 'tis she who gives elasticity to the fashionable dancer,

able dancer, who warms the imagination of the poet, and strews flowers in the valley of the shadow of death, extending her empire beyond his gloomy reign; she decorates the tomb of man, and furnishes his funeral obsequies: This generous ardour, this unextinguishable flame, is a gift bestowed by heaven to warm and elevate our nature: 'Tis in high-born minds that this passion shines with most resplendence; law and the arts owe their institution to the illustrious genius of those who have most distinguished themselves for the love of celebrity, the efforts of patriotism, are urged by this aspiring passion; and 'tis this which infuses that invincible courage into the breast of the warrior, by which he is led on to present himself as

an

an impregnable fortress—a living wall; but, alas! though in some instances we cannot but acknowledge its utility, it remains to be confessed that the love of fame sometimes leads to unworthy pursuits, and deludes us into a maze of errors and absurdities; and, I must again repeat, however artifice may labour to conceal it, the love of fame is predominate in every heart; this imperious passion has universal sway—the ambitious man will undergo any suffering for the gratification of hearing his own eulogium—the modest man shuns commendation, only that he more effectually obtain it. In a soul truly elevated ambition is ever connected with virtue, whilst in a mind less noble it is the sole principle of action, although it may some-

times so artfully disguise itself in the semblance of goodness as to deceive the greatest penetration in dispositions; the furthest removed from virtue ambition appears unmasked in its most unlovely form: Votaries of unbounded ambition, cease to pursue an object which degrades you, and no longer suffer yourselves to be seduced by the glare of false glory;—real greatness consists in obeying the laws of justice, in subduing the violence of passion by the majestic force of reason; celebrity may be enjoyed as a reward of our actions, but it ought never to be their *end*—public services alone receive public commendation; if we would be illustrious we should imitate great examples—do all that a virtuous man should

should do, and avoid all appearance of evil. In many cases the name of ambition is used to conceal the blackest crimes; a man of talent is ambitious, an ambitious man is a hero, and an hero is a great man—such is the respect we pay to words! Ah, why are we not more ambitious of excellency in justice, in benevolence, in wisdom, instead of aspiring after riches, rank, and admiration, since health, peace, and contentment, those real, not artificial, blessings, become unnecessary in the eyes of turbulent ambition; restless vanity, and gnawing envy, usurp their place; behold a man the favourite of fortune, healthful and vigorous in his person, possessing every blessing of domestic life, and yet all this felicity appears

pears to him as nothing; what sources of enjoyment are open to him in the calm bosom of domestic life, and in conferring benefits on his dependants, and the numerous tenantry by which he is surrounded, and yet this vast domain, derived from his ancestors, is scarcely ever honoured with his presence; he feels not the value of health, he rejoices not in the advantages of affluence, his life, which might be spent in varying delights, is consumed with discontent and anxiety; independant as his situation renders him, he nevertheless devotes himself to splendid slavery, even his sleeping hours are not exempt from the pains of envy, he writes, he cringes, he solicits, he foregoes pleasure, he gives up his time to disagreeable

able employments, he renounces all the happiness of life to obtain occupations, dignities, and honour, which the moment nature resumes her empire over his mind, he will cease to value; how blind then is the ambitious man to pass every object that can render existence delightful, every sweet domestic comfort, and exert all his energy in pursuing a shadow which rapidly succeed each other, and may be plunge in shame or sorrow the most amiable and virtuous characters, tear the fond wife from the partner of her heart, and in the field of battle, perhaps rob a beauteous groupe of infant cherubs of the tender cares a parent only can bestow; but it is time, my dear Glenmorgan, that I should now re-

release you from my moralizing epistle. I know not how it is, but when addressing the early friend of my youth, the kind sharer in all the afflictions we have hitherto undergone, but for which a gracious Providence has thought fit so amply to recompence us, I cannot but impart to his sympathetic bosom some of the variety of sensations with which my breast abounds. I am now, my friend, about to enter the great theatre of life under the most flattering auspices; fate has fixed me in the diplomatic line, and under the wing of my noble brother, I trust I shall fulfil the station to which I am so unexpectedly raised, so as to merit the good-will of all parties, and the censure of none, since schismaticks, both in religion

gion and the state, are like a top, if you scourge them you keep them up, but if you treat them with gentleness they will go down alone; a soft current is soon stopped, but a strong stream resisted breaks into many, or overwhelms all. On my return to that country where distress have occasioned both the sorrows, and the felicity of those far dearer to me than life, fame, or wealth, I will endeavour to forget that there are in it characters undeserving of any sentiment but hatred and contempt, for particular instances of ingratitude and injuries received by an individual, should not be permitted to narrow and contract our charity, into general doubt or jealousy.

Adieu, my friend, your last letter gave

me hopes that you will shortly be in town on regimental business; your old friend Rossanna and her generous lord will welcome you with the cordial ardour of friendship; and I am commissioned in in the names of the Marquis and Marchioness of Desmond to request you will immediately on your arrival hasten to Fair-Brooke Lodge, near Windsor, where you will find a festive party assembled in the harmony of love and friendship, to celebrate the recent marriage of my happy happy sister.

It is a delightful idea that she is thus warmly received by the noble family into which she has entered, since any sort of dissatisfaction on their part to the alliance would have been a considerable drawback

back on her felicity. I trust in the few days the family will spend together on this occasion, a perfect reconciliation will take place between Lady Desmond and her mother, who have lately had a slight degree of coolness, highly distressing, amongst those who are united by the tenderest dearest, ties of nature. The marchioness, young, lovely, and admired, has given more into the fashionable follies of the day than her amiable family think consistent with her reputation and rank; Lady Avenmore, tremblingly alive to every event in which the happiness of her beloved daughter is concerned, with the true feelings of maternal anxiety, has represented to her ladyship some impropri-

ties in the characters of those with whom her unthinking child associates, but Lady Desmond, elated by her own supposed consequence, over-looked the advice of the tenderest best of parents, who could have no motive but the true advantage of her Olivia, in any advice she gave; and notwithstanding it has not yet had the weight it should have carried, when coming from the lips of a tender and affectionate parent, yet her ladyship still hopes a short period will restore to her a daughter, not more lovely in her person than distinguished for early piety, implicit duty, and the most unadulterated and affectionate heart, till, by the mistaken indulgence of a fond and amiable husband,

band, she was permitted to form for herself a society, in which the characters of her intimates were not remarkable for propriety of conduct. Lord Desmond, I believe, in the hope of bringing his lovely wife once more to the amiable standard she has quitted, insisted Lord Avenmore should go to a villa of his on his marriage, not having one of his own near town; the dowager, as I must now distinguish the two countesses, at first refused this proposal, not being sufficiently pleased with the conduct of her daughter to countenance her house with her presence; but her objections were overruled by the joint arguments of her children, who thought by this arrange-

ment Lady Desmond would have an opportunity of being once more in the bosom of her family, and, perhaps, in time *be again* the amiable character she once was, and the beloved of all their hearts; interested from gratitude and affection as I am, for every branch of this illustrious house, most devoutly does my heart subscribe to every reasonable wish of the most affectionate of relatives, who cannot taste of perfect felicity while a stray sheep belongs to a flock heretofore united by every endearing tie.

The marchioness, fond of every novelty, is at this moment enraptured with our timid, modest, gentle Rossanna, and overpowers her with carresses, and

and calling her, at every second word, her sister, her dear dear sister: Defend me, Glenmorgan, whenever it is my fate to become a Benedict, from any sort of violence of disposition; and grant me, heaven, a woman possessing the character I once flattered myself to have called my own; that is to say, a lovely, affectionate uuassuming heart, which would meet affection with interest, and without whim and uncertainty, who was every day *equally tender, warm-hearted,* and *sincere*; and who to-day would not court your regard with an *enthusiastic warmth*, and the next, perhaps, not even *recognize the dearest friend of childhood.* I am particular perhaps in my ideas, yet I think the

frivolity of such a character would absolutely disgust the warmth of my ardent mind. Oh, let me not suffer my mind to dwell on the happiness I have lost! suffice it to acquaint you I have again met my once idolized Emma; it was at an assembly at the Marchioness of Desmond's, given in honour of my sister's nuptials; she instantly recognized the earliest friends of her heart, and with the most unembarressed and affectionate air, renewed our former acquaintance; her manner was warm, friendly, and polite, yet the proper and marked attention and regard which was visible between Lord Mount Travers and herself, was a convincing proof that connubial attachment in a heart guided

by

by virtuous sentiment, will gain the ascendency over every sentiment of passion contracted in early youth. I at first felt *all* the treasure I had lost, but when her ruby lips dwelt with all a mother's energy, with all mother's fondness, on the children of him I had considered as my rival, a sort of instantaneous transformation took place in my heart, and its warmest wish was breathed for her happiness, which I plainly perceived the kind affection of an adoring husband had united with his own by the strong bonds of gratitude and duty. My Rossanna delighted to see the friend of her infant years, renewed with all the energy of her mind, an intimacy of so many years; and from the moment of our meeting to the present period,

scarcely a day has passed without our being together at the houses of each other; this intercourse has given my heart a degree of relief I had thought it almost incapable of receiving, since it has confirmed me the lovely Lady Mount Travers is a happy wife, and the fondest of all mothers; fiend-like would be the man who should dare attempt to sow the seeds of discord in the heart of connubial felicity; no, Glenmorgan, next to the wish my heart entertains for the happiness of my nearest connections, is its fondest hope that the felicity enjoyed by the Earl and Countess of Mount Travers may be permanent as their virtue.

That I may soon have an opportunity of

of introducing my dearest friend to the members of the happy circle, one of which I am, is the sincerest wish of his

FRANCIS PORTLAND.

LETTER V.

Rossanna, Countess of Avenmore to her Mother.

Fair-Brooke Lodge.

TIME flies with such rapidity at this sweet place, my beloved mother, that it is scarcely possible to trace its progress, each moment being marked by some new amusement; the fair mistress of this mansion, contrary to all

our wishes, invited a splendid party to partake of the princely hospitality of of Fair-Brooke Lodge, which in reality more resembles the abode of a benevolent fairy than the mansion of an English nobleman ; nothing that luxury can invent or fortune supply, is omitted to make it the most splendid villa in the world ; and the marchioness feels a gratification in having her houses, carriages, and every thing belonging to her, superior to those of any other person. I had hoped we should have been a family party, but her ladyship exists but in a crowd, and after the first fortnight of our marriage the house has been crowded with company ; balls, masquerades, and private theatricals,

succeed

succeed each other; to-morrow they are to perform a play, written by the amiable Mr. Osborn, whose affecting little history I mentioned to you shortly after I became an inmate of this dear family, to whom I am now united by every tie of love and gratitude; oh, my mother, your happy happy Rossanna has now no wish on earth but that of being once more enfolded in your arms, and again to embrace my darling father, a happiness my lord assures me we may expect in the course of two months; how ardently does my heart anticipate that blessed period!

Cannot the united prayers of your children prevail on our dearest mother to come over to us, as my lord informs me,

me, in the letters of recal and pardon, which were forwarded to America, my father was ordered to this country before he visited the dear shores of Ireland; oh, surely if your Rossanna was as dear to you as formerly, you would not hesitate to indulge her with your presence; I am now the more urgent in my solicitations because my lord informs me he does not go to Ireland for three months, a delay I shall regret more than words can express, if my mother will not be prevailed upon to join her happy children; we will meet you wherever you appoint; and surely in our present fortunate circumstances, no business can require your presence at Briarfield, where, in a short time, I fondly flatter myself a dear

dear circle of beloved friends will assemble to congratulate the return of their beloved exile. I doubt not all our former acquaintances will crowd around us, wishing to make us now believe that they feel the most ecstatic joy at our good fortune; but experience has taught us to know what value we are to set on such professions; when in the hour of distress, how little do we know of the human heart, until we have experienced in some degree, the changes incidental to us as sublunary beings; how strangely versatile are the opinions of those automatons who would wish the world to believe like—

"The spider's touch, which exquisitely fine!
"Feels at each thread, and lives along the line."

That they are all sensibility and friendship,

ship, without knowing what is either joy or sorrow, but who exclaim in affected raptures at every trifling circumstance; such you well know, my dearest mother, have been the conduct of numbers, who, at the period of our most reduced state, sometimes did not recollect us in the street, and who, when they did meet us in society, used to sympathize with us for my dear father's misfortunes, as they termed the change in our prospects, but which with all their disguise discovered the secret satisfaction envious and little minds are apt to feel at the reduced circumstances of those they have called their friends.

I am harrassed to death with the etiquette

quette of receiving visits, which at present are confined to family connections, but as my lord's are numerous, it is unpleasant, and the tumultuous amusements of which I am obliged to partake, do not much agree with the simple manners I have been accustomed to.

I dread to-morrow evening, when, at the request of my lord, whose smallest wish I ought not to oppose, however repugnant to my own, I have consented to play the part of Emeline in the good Mr. Osborn's play; and as I am much pleased with it, I have requested him to allow me to send you a copy, that you may see the character in which your Rossanna is to figure; I wished much

to have excused myself, but every voice was against me, even that of my dear second mother, who joined in the plan against me; I smiling, told them many *actresses had become countesses* but that I believed few *countesses had become actresses.*

The marchioness has since our residence at this place, been attentive and affectionate to the countess and her sister; and I trust this temporary absence from her fashionable friends will, in time, wean her from their dangerous society; they have not been invited, by the express desire of Lady Avenmore, who told both her daughter and her lord, that nothing should prevail on her

her to become an inmate under the same roof with Lady Berresford; the marchioness at first remonstrated, but as her lord prudently joined her mother, she thought it wisest not to rebel against their joint authority; and though at the beginning a little restless and uneasy, the variety of amusements she has planned has now apparently reconciled her to a separation from her favourite; and I hope on our return to town, the marquis will continue to keep her separate from those who are not proper associates for her innocence and youth.

Adieu, dearest best of parents, the only drawback to the happiness of your

your Rossanna is her separation from the most beloved of mothers.

Ever your's more than her own,

Is your dutiful and affectionate

ROSSANNA AVENMORE.

THE

FAVORITE,

A PLAY OF FIVE ACTS:

As performed at the

MARQUIS OF DESMOND'S.

Characters.

MEN.

Adolphus, King of Sweden	*Earl of Avenmore.*
Valvaise, his Favorite	*Mr. F. Portland.*
Alleran, Brother to Adelaide and Emeline	*Marquis of Desmond.*
Duplaise, Chirstien } Friends to the Favorite	*Lord Mount Travers.* / *Colonel Fortescue.*
Marcus, a very old Forrester	*Mr Osborn.*

WOMEN.

Countess of Barnham	*Marchion. of Desmond*
Adelaide, Emeline } her Daughters	*Lady Cecilia Darcey.* / *Rossanna, Countess of Avenmore.*

Lords, Guards, Soldiers, Attendants, &c.

THE

FAVORITE.

Act I.

SCENE.—*An extensive Forest; at the entrance a Cottage.*

Enter Valvaise, dressed as for the Chace; he looks round him, then speaks.

Val. MOST favor'd spot of nature, luxuriant in her gifts, sweet forest, hail! Beneath thy spreading shades my youthful limbs have oft repos'd—the cradle of my childhood! With many a rural sport oft have I gambol'd on thy verdant

verdant bosom, from whence I plucked the vivid rose of health, planted it on my cheeks, then blushed the theft. The pampered sons of luxury will have none of thy rich aids; with infidelity they pass thy gate 'cause poverty stands porter. Sweet forest, hail! and thou beloved cottage,—*(addresssing himself to the cottage)*—where on the knee paternal and maternal, I learnt to lisp the endearing epithets of filial love; all hail! Bring back the recollection of their peerless worth, and lift to heaven my warm imagination, that, with the eye of faith, I may behold my parent's blessedness. What mean these tears? —I will not dash them off; that weakness which disgraces not the christian degradeth not the man.—*(Enter Marcus,*

cus, a hatchet in his hand.)—Ha! the good old Marcus, whose arms a thousand times have dandled me—Now for a trial of his memory—this change of habit and a three years absence will gage it to the quick.—Father I greet thee humbly!—*(to Marcus.)*

Mar.—*(Leaning on his hatchet)*—'Tis passing strange to hear so brave a gentleman talk of humility.

Val. Seest thou ought vile in my appearance, friend, to doubt my words?

Mar. My eyes are very dim!

Val. Suspicion more than age, perhaps, has dim'd them. During thy long experience of mankind, some purse-proud worldling may have cross'd thy humble path with haughty exultation.

Mar. Your honor's pleas'd to jeer; mayhap was I to speak against the rich you'd have me 'fore the king.

Val. What then? the king has not a subject so mild, so affable, so gracious as his most gracious self. He'd speak to thee, old man, as tho' thou wert his fellow.

Mar. Belike all this is true,—I saw him once, and hear'd him talk most bravely.

Val. What did he talk of to thee?

Mar. Alack a day! he did not talk to me, and yet he made me weep.

Val. Then thou did'st witness to some act of glorious mercy; for with such marks our bounteous master stamps

stamps his royal presence. Prithee the time and place?

Mar. The time some three years back, the place under this same good oak, whose sweeping branches, by help of this my hatchet, I mean to carry home for winter fuel.

Val. Oh spare it, spare it!

Mar. Good truth and that I will, an't like your worship.

Val. I thank thee—Thou shall not want for fuel—To thy story.

Mar. Why master you must know, poor as our dwellings are within this forest, some gentle people once inhabited that little cabin—Take notice of it, sir.

Val. My soul pays homage to its ruins—Go on.

Mar. There liv'd a gracious couple; now by my holy dame they were so wise, so pious, and so pitiful, that were I to speak half the good I know of them, my eyes would not hold water.

Val.—(aside)—This is nature's language, how simple yet how penetrating!

Mar. These gentle folks, for gentle folks they were, tho' some would say you nay, because they vaunted not themselves, but liv'd and work'd as we did—*(Valcaise covers his eyes)*—— brought with them to our forest a son—

Val—(aside)—O God!

Mar. 'Bout ten months old, as I can well remember, and well I shou'd remember

remember, for I did love the babe, and dandled him as he had been my own—sometimes he'd pass his hands over my face, and sometimes stroke my beard; in truth I lov'd him.

Val.—*(aside)*—Hold! hold! my heart!

Mar. He was his parents' darling, who forsooth would make a scholar of him 'fore he was a man, so sent him to the college to get book learning; I knew not what I ail'd, but pin'd and pin'd as tho' I'd been his nurse.

Val. Yet now you would not know him, tho' he shou'd stand before you?

Mar. Mayhap not, for now he's next to the king as you shall quickly hear: nay some will tell you he's a greater man of the two.

Val. Proceed.

Mar. Whilst my young playmate, God bless him, stay'd away at college both his parents dy'd, heaven rest their ashes!

Val. Amen, Amen!

Mar. The youth returned to see them handsomely put under ground, and sorely he lamented, but not alone, though longer than us poor neighbours, who bore him company.

Val. Alas! still does he mourn their loss!

Mar. Perchance not; I've heard say 'tis out of fashion to weep at court.

Val. In our master's court all that is good and virtuous receives the sanction of his bright example.

Mar.

Mar. 'Tis odds but Val. dear honest heart, had spent his stock of tears 'fore fortune chang'd: for bitterly he took on, most bitterly!

Val. Thou art a just historian.

Mar. A comely, modest, gentle lad, was my Valvaise, as these old eyes e'er look'd on. Sadly he mourn'd, and mop'd about the spot that held his parents' ashes; and civilly he shun'd all who would have talk'd away his grief; from me he hid himself as tho' I'd been a thief, meaning to steal his tears.—In troth, to make him smile, I would, with these grey hairs, have gambol'd like a boy.

Val. Believe it not unkindly meant in him. Alas! my father, there are

afflictions to which all sport is torture!

Mar. By your gay habit, I took you for a lord, but by your speech I trow you're better than a lord; and now I look upon your face again, something I see in it so like my own Valvaise, as makes my old heart leap.

Val. My friendship then, in lieu of his, receive; I'll prop thy age, and thou shall be my father.

Mar.—*(dashing his hand over his eyes.)*—My lazy blood has got so sudden a jerk—I cannot bear it.—To my work then—*(going.)*

Val. We do not part so soon; words shall no more oppress thy bashful worth——actions alone shall speak my veneration.

Mar.

Mar. Just so,—so sweet and gracious Adolphus look'd when, with his royal hand, he rais'd my darling boy, and dubb'd him noble. Valvaise was young, and left his humble home at fortune's call——'twas well in him,—— but I am much in age, and would not turn my back on my old friend the forest for a king's ransom.

Val. Then I will serve thee as best shall satisfy thy wishes and thy wants.

Mar. My wishes are to live and die an honest man, and to have strength withal to earn my daily mess of pottage—no other want have I,—but, master, if a poor man's prayer be heard in heaven, God will reward you.

Val. Meet me here about this time to-morrow; so well I like thy converse, that, tho' an early hour, which courtiers seldom mark, I will not fail thee.

Mar. Dismiss me not, I do beseech your honour, 'till I have told my story.

Val. To-morrow my good friend.

Mar. My sand runs fast, to-morrow I may die. O, 'tis the rarest tale—'twould grieve me not to tell it.

Val.—(aside)—Should I forbid him, I take no little part from his poor store of pleasures.

Mar. Shall it be now? In truth I'll not be tedious.

Val. Say on, my father.

Mar.

Mar. Heaven bless your honour; and so as I was saying, Valvaise would not be comforted, and me he shun'd above my fellows.

Val. I do remember.

Mar. But I loving him well, follow'd his steps unnotic'd, hoping to put in my word when he should be inclin'd for merry discourse.

Val. 'Twas kindly meant.

Mar. Near to this tree one day, seeming to work, I watch'd his motions,—on the bare root he stretch'd himself along with a printed book in his hand: a sad companion to my thinking.—So along comes a fine gentleman like your honour, and ask'd him what his book concern'd; he answer'd as how it was about

friendship, on which the stranger spoke huge fine language, and our young forrester gave him wit for wit I'll warrant.'

Val. I am in haste, good father.

Mar. I hope no offence your honour—after much talk together the stranger said as how my boy was a fit friend for the king; but he said nay, because he was no flatterer; when to be sure! the stranger declared he was the king his own self, down drop'd my hatchet, up starts Valvaise, and would have fallen on his knees, but his good majesty raised him up, hugg'd him lovingly, and call'd him friend and brother, as tho'f he been his own flesh and blood, and carry'd him away to court,

court, where folks do tell me he is made as much of as his master

[*Horns and the shouts of Huntsmen are heard at a distance.*

Val. This way comes the king; stay, and I'll present thee to him.

Mar. Excuse me, good your worship, to see the king once in my life is enough for Marcus.

Val. Be it so, but meet me here to-morrow.

Mar. If heaven spare my life I'll surely come, and many thanks I render to thy goodness.

Val. 'Till then farewell, dear father. —(*Marcus retires into the forest.*)— Tho' coarsely cover'd, and more coarsely fed, thou art right honourable!— (*Horns and shouting near.*)—Adolphus here

here commanded me to wait, or rather, in the voice of friendship, besought me here to meet him; the treasures of his virtuous soul are open'd to my view; had he a vice lay hid amongst the store of his perfections, 'tis I might pluck it thence, and not incur his anger; but to conceal a fault, did he possess one, or gloss it o'er with specious flattery, the varnish of an hour, his confidence were forfeited; from such a stock how luscious are the fruits of friendship; the services we pay to such a master, how easy and how grateful!—O tyrant love! thou art the only enemy I have to cope with!

Enter Adolphus follow'd by a train.

Adol.—(Speaking as he enters)—Here ends our morning chase, and now my

my brother sportsmen collect our forces; flush'd with victory, lead them to quarters, that the fierce bear and timid stag may shew their heads in safety. There is a time for mercy, as for conquest and for reflection, as for recreation.—Valvaise alone attend us.

[*Exit Courtiers*

Val. My royal master—

Adol. Let us dismiss the language of a court, and speak as man to man, and friend to friend.

Val. Should I in speech betray, or boast the condesension of my prince, some envious man might rob me of thy favor; but 'fore the face of heaven, the only present witness of thy graciousness, as man to man, and friend to friend thee.—

Adol.—*(Laying his hand on his shoulder)*—Valvaise come nearer—Know you the lady Bernham?

Val. My liege, I've sometimes seen her—whither leads this question.—*(aside.)*

Adol. I would repose a secret in thy breast, too weighty for my own.

Val. Your slave but lives to serve his gracious master. O make me useful to thy peace or pleasure, and I will bless thee for it, more than for raising me to what I am, the creature of thy bounty.

Adol. I know thy heart; I know its honest warmth, yet fear to chill the fervent flame of friendship, should I confess my weakness.

Val. If I am doubted—

Adol.

Adol. It is myself I doubt, yet I will tell thee all; but first I shall require some information of those bright stars that newly shone upon us with more than radiant lustre.

Val. My lord!

Adol. Say hast thou e'er convers'd with those divinities that grac'd our last night's entertainment—Gonsalus our old and faithful servant meant well, when for our sport he form'd this masquerade; but oh! that sport has cost his master dearly!—Why stand'st thou mute.

Val. I wait your royal pleasure to disclose of whom I am to speak.

Adol. 'Till now I have not found thee dull of apprehension,—were we not talking of my lady Bernham?

Val.

Val. True my good lord, a wise and prudent mother, who in solitude has rais'd two lovely daughters.

Adol. There, there, thou hast it.

Val. In solitude watch'd o'er their infant charms, so fame reports, each day that brought them nearer to perfection, increas'd her wholesome caution; with jealous care she screens them from the arden't gaze of admiration, destructive oft to maiden bashfulness.

Adol. Had'st thou been near to mark the agitation of my soul, when from the hebe cheek of Adelaide, kind chance remov'd her mask, revealing to my sight the glories of her face, 'twould help thee through the labyrinth of my wishes.

Val.

Val.—*(aside)*—'Tis Adelaide, and I am undone for ever!

Adol. I held her too in converse, and found the treasures of her face out-rival'd by cælestial wisdom, and more than virgin purity of manners. Her blushes soft and blooming as the morn, has rob'd me of a heart, 'till now impervious to the shafts of love.

Val. You love her then, my lord.

Adol. 'Twere treason but to doubt it.

Val. And yet this sudden tumult of the heart, that sure must war with innocence or reason, will stop its progress when cold reflection comes to aid thy wisdom, and to prop thy virtues.

Adol. There are no guards 'gainst beauty

beauty such as hers, and passion such as mine.

Val. What means my liege!

Adol. Not to offend 'gainst innocence or love, but by uniting both, be rich in both.

Val.—(aide)—Prosper him heaven! tho' every view that terminates with hope be closed on me for ever.

Adol. Why that dejected look? Is it because you wish me not to share the bless'd prerogative of my many subjects who loving wed, and wedding are most happy?

Val.—(aside)—Henceforth be every tender expectation servile to gratitude.

Adol. Still art thou silent.

Val. Foreseeing bars that may impede

pede your royal purpose, on them I pause.

Adol. Speak out.

Val. Your subjects approbation!

Adol. True, they expect that we shall strengthen our domestic powers by an alliance with some potent neighbour.

Val. Their honest hopes! Must they reliquish them?

Adol. Let them hope still—in private I will wed my Adelaide, then move their hearts to give my choice their sanction.

Val. I am thy servant;—from nothing raised to dignity and power; yet trust me, sire, low as I was, and high as thou hast raised me, I would not be the slave—the tool of vice, to purchase

chase princely honours! Thee I can serve unhurting my heart's firm principle, for thou art greater than a king, and almost more than man; command me to the utmost; rather this heart should burst with secret anguish than fail me in the trial of my duty.

Adol. We will not tax thy heart too heavily; the service shall be pleasing; this night the lovely Adelaide must be our queen, and you shall woo her for me.

Val.—*(starts)*—I woo her for your highness.

Adol. You in my name must woo her, and woo her warmly; were I to visit her it might awake suspicions in my subjects.

Val.

Val.—(aside)—Her happiness I love more than her person;—it shall be so. —*(to Adolphus)*—How far may I reveal thy gracious purpose?—My liege, she has a mother.

Adol. We come not like the robber in the night, to steal her from a mother's arms unlicens'd; first to the countess reveal our fervent love, next to her angel daughter, to all besides let silence seal thy lips.

Val. May heaven inspire my voice, and give me words to charm, that I may lead her to thy chaste embrace, with modest ardour languishing to bless thee.

Adol. There spoke my own Valvaise!

Val.—(aside)—Gods, I thank thee! she dreams not of the passion that consumes

sumes me, fair Emmeline alone is mistress of my secret, nor knows she who it is that leaves the rich deposit in her keeping.

Adol. Go, hie thee to my charmer; thy gentle manners, and thy soft persuasion, will move her to be grateful.

Val. If gratitude were all—

Adol.—(interrupting him)—Oh, it is more than gratitude I ask! Teach her to love thy friend, with ardour like thy friend's! Tell her she's dearer to my soul than are my subjects' empire, or my fame! Swear that my passion never shall abate; and for the treasures of her heart and hand, I mean to deck her with a regal crown, ere six months be elapsed, myself will be but second in my

my kingdom, and wish no greater glory than to serve her.

Val. If I be luke-warm, or betray thy confidence, all honest thoughts forsake me, and may I be exposed a public villain.

Adol. Long have I known thy worth, thy friendship, thy fidelity, rather than those I'd doubt my own existence; but let's away, the moments of this precious day we waste; this day, if thy best eloquence prevail, that shall be marked on my heart's calendar thrice hallow'd.

[*Exeunt*

SCENE II.—*A Room fronting the Street in the Countess of Barnham's House.*

Enter Adelaide and Emmeline, arm-in-arm.

Ade. No more, sweet Emmeline; your gravity ill becomes the subject.

Emme. I cannot but repent.

Ade. Pish! a mere bagatelle, and may produce adventures.

Emme.—*(sighs)*—Yes, and dangerous ones.

Ade. You blush.

Emme. I blush!

Ade. Scarlet deep.—What think you of the king?

Emme.

Emme. As all good subjects should; —I think of him with humble reverence.

Ade. No more?

Emme. What would you insinuate?

Ade. Why do not all good subjects love their king?

Emme. Yes, with such love as we to heaven look up.

Ade. That should be fervent.

Emme. Aye, but awful!

Ade. Be plain; you think Adolphus charming.

Emme. Suppose it; all who know his virtues would join in my opinion.

Ade. Last night among his numerous attendants, saw you not one that did eclipse his master?

Emme. That were impossible.

Ade. What say you of his favourite?—Him we have often seen, the king but once.

Emme. For manly graces, excellence of heart, and gentleness of manners, we'll call him second to his royal patron.

Ade. Valvaise cannot be second to any prince on earth!

Emme. You are partial, Adelaide.

Ade. To speak the voice of universal fame, if that be partial, I must plead most guilty.

Emme. Let each enjoy her own heart's best opinion.

Ade. Agreed! 'Twere better our affections take different channels than run together.

Emme. Never, I do entreat, my dearest sister, think me so vain, so wicked,

or

or so weak, to lift my eyes above the flight of prudence.

Ade. You're serious Emmeline; are we not talking for our sport?—But hush, my mother.

Enter Countess of Barnham.

Count. How now, girls, why do you loiter here?—a busy mind, and notable fingers, often I have told you are the surest guards to virtue: When I brought you hither, 'twas not to mate with indolence;—to your needles then; make yourselves good housewifes, or you'll never get good husbands.

Ade. Madam, we only wait to see the king return from hunting.

Count. Tush! tush! what will the

king do for you?—besides the cavalcade has passed already.

Emme.—(sighs)—Then we've miss'd the sight.

Count. Take care girls, this court life, and these mask'd balls, do not give you a habit of idleness; take care, I say, or I'll have done with them.

Ade. Trust us, dear mother, we will ne'er abuse your kind indulgence.

Enter Servant.

Serv. Madam, a gentleman desires the honour of an audience with your ladyship.

Count. Say I'll wait upon him.

Exit Servant.

Ade. Shall we attend your ladyship?

Count.

Count. By no means, 'tis unfitting your sex and quality to be seen by a man.

Emme. We're all obedience.

Ade. To your commands, dear mother.

[*Exit at one door the Countess, at the other Ade. and Emme.*

END OF ACT THE FIRST.

ACT II.

SCENE CONTINUED.

Enter Countess and Adelaide.

Count. Yes, yes, my sweet child, in your very best suit!

Ade. On what occasion, madam?

Count. To hear a love tale that will charm thy senses!—Valvaise himself will tell it;—go to, go to, put on your ornaments; and with your brightest smiles, receive the favourite of Adolphus!

Ade.

Ade.—*(aside)*—Valvaise! and shall I hear a love tale from his lips?—Oh, ecstasy of bliss!—*(to the Countess)*—Was it Valvaise who just now asked an audience of you, madam?

Count. None else, my jewel, but go, for in an hour I bid him come again.

Ade. One question more, dear mother; did he wish carnestly to see me then, or did he *cooly* say he'd wait your leisure.

Count. Most warmly he entreated to be admitted to you, but I forbade him, till my princess, should have prepared herself to give him stately audience.

Ade. Why stately audience?

Count. Patience! Valvaise will tell you; but daughter, on my blessing I do charge you to be secret, nor Alleran nor

Emmeline are yet permitted to behold thy glorious prospects.

Ade. What means my mother.

Count. Be silent, and be happy;—Valvaise awaits to bless thee;—he must explain my meaning.

Ade.—*(aside)*—Again she names him! surely my hopes have not misled my senses? Oh, dear disguise, under whose sacred mask, I heard the honeyed accents of his voice, which whispered heavenly truths to Adelaide, unknowing Adelaide.

Count. Haste to your toilet, Valvaise will presently be here.

Ade. Madam I go. But why the sad impressions that hang upon my heart, that fain would rise to meet its dearest lord.—*(aside and exit.)*

Count.

Count. Shall Adelaide be queen, and I be mother to a queen!—good heaven it is too much! Madam, said he, in humble shades you've raised a flower to deck the bosom of a prince, and my most gracious prince demands it of you. So said the blessed messenger of the most blessed tidings that 'ere my ear saluted. Had I a score of handsome daughters, in solitude I'd rear them; a face, the sweets of which are often looked upon, attract but buzzing flies, such as with prudence may be drawn towards it, pass by disgusted.

Enter Valvaise.

Count. O sir! what brings you back so soon?—Has the king chang'd his pur-

pose? Your presence bids me fear his royal heart revolts from love and Adelaide.

Val. Courage, madam, I bring you better tidings:—My lord the king by me returns you thanks, grateful as though your approbation had at once both gratified his love and his ambition.

Count. Now blessings be upon his gracious head, and rest on yours!

Val. He does beseech you not to postpone his wishes.

Count. Most happy, happy daughter.

Val. He does entreat that I without delay, may be admitted to his lovely mistress, and woo her to compliance.

Count. Nor will she give your friendly heart the labour of much tongue-talk; though in her breast the gem of maiden

modesty she wears, trust me, most joyfully will she receive, so young, so charming, and so great a husband!

Val. May I see her madam?—My master's love keeps pace with his impatience, but cannot distance it.

Count. Good, sir, as yet she's unprepared for your reception, but in obedience to his majesty's command, I'll send her to attend you.

[*Exit*

Val. Now, now, Adolphus, shall I give thee proof of my integrity, severer far than that with which the martyr'd saint confirms his holy faith; tortures that only penetrate the flesh is ease to what I suffer. Down, down, fond heart! thy tender offsprings in their birth I smother, rather than prove a traitor

traitor to loyalty and friendship. Oh, Adelaide! why have I gazed on thy celestial charms?—Why heard thy syren voice?—Why doated on thy softness? Oh! weight of woe to woo thee for another!

Enter Adelaide.

Val.—(approaching, and gazing on her passionately)—When evening shades o'er-cast the hemisphere, and all below of beautiful and good is veil'd in darkness, the heart of man partakes the gloom of nature; again the sun—the dazzling sun salutes us, when night and all its horrors we forget, and worship thus, the sweet return of morning!—*(kneels and rises hastily)*—My God, what am I doing?—*(aside.)*

Ade.

Ade.—*(confused)*—Sir, sir!

Val. Who can behold the assemblage of such charms with silent admiration? Forgive, my freedom, madam; he who adores, and he who never loved, alike are subjects to the powers of sense; surprise, not insolence, made me forget my distance.

Ade. Sir, when my mother gave me her commands, to wait upon you here, no harsh injunction followed, and, in obedience to my duty, I shall permit myself to listen to you without displeasure.

Val. Fair maid, the cause in which I I wish to interest the tenderest of your tender inclinations, better might suit the tongue of learned eloquence, and find a readier pass to your affections, than coming from the most untaught of nature's

ture's sons, one who has no pretence to ought but pity, or ever sought the honours which lavish fortune in her sportive moods has heaped upon him.

Ade. Speak on. Another tongue but your's would wrong the business of a heart so excellent!

Val. Heaven grant the suit in which the wishes of my soul are bound, find favour with you!

Ade. Believe me, sir, the queen of female virtues, modesty, has not a votary more religiously her own, than Adelaide, but in my heart the love of candour and sincerity are mingled with her laws.

Val. By them, I do conjure thee, gracious excellence, fairest of wisdom's daughters, tell me can you receive a generous, a disinterested, a faithful heart, which from its lord hath strayed, to thy

soft bosom, and waits upon thy will to give it entrance.

Ade. Oh, Valvaise ! there's magic in thy voice as there is fascination in thy language.

Val. Knew you the friend for whom I plead, for whom my soul is warmed !

Ade.—(aside)—His friend ! too sure then were my dire forebodings !

Val. His wondrous love, warm, lasting, pure as that celestial flame by vestal virgins fed, that mounts to heaven.

Ade. What else, sir ?

Val. His greatness and his goodness were subjects inexhaustible,

Ade. Now have you done ?

Val. 'Twere heinous to omit his lesser claims to your affections, such as a manly form, cast in perfections mould, the precious casket of a soul more precious!

Ade. I know but one that can deserve such praises.

Val. One only can deserve them, and he is dearer to my grateful heart than the life-blood that warms it.

Ade, Yet him thou would'st not praise.

Val, Praise but dishonours such as are above all praise; my prince, who doats upon thy beauties, who courts thee to his arms, excels all other men in justice, wisdom, gentleness, and mercy, as you in beauty, and all female graces, excel the fairest of your lovely sex.

Ade.—(turning from him)—'Tis well, sir;—I think myself most honour'd but most wretch'd!

Val.

Val. Madam, I do beseech you send not back this answer to Adolphus.

Ade. What would'st thou.

Val. By me to bliss he woo's you, to certain blessedness; accept this night his vows, and be his much-lov'd bride, his queen and mistress.

Ade. I'd be the bride of death, suffer his cold embrace, and lay me in the narrowest of his cells, rather than wed Adolphus!

Val. Recal those fatal words, and make not me the instrument to stab my master's peace.

Ade. Women, 'tis said, are weak, irresolute, and easily controul'd, how comes it then, that I, a simple maid, should fix my purpose, and fixing, fix it ever?

Val.

Val.—*(aside)*—Shuddering, I stand upon a precipice, which ever way I turn destruction threatens me.

Ade. Now tell me, sir, is there a man on earth but him you call your friend, for whom you thus would plead.

Val. By my religious hopes, that I may ever keep my faith and my integrity, there is not.

Ade. And yet there lives one for whom you might more gratefully have pleaded.

Val. Hold, madam! were I to know the rival of my prince, my soul would scorn him!

Ade. Alas! alas! you will not understand me!—*(weeps)*

Val.—*(aside)*—O for the power to wipe away those precious tender drops by

by means less foul, less black, than treachery!

Ade. Why have I been deceiv'd!—so cruelly deceived?—Why said my mother go to Valvaise, Valvaise awaits to bless thee?

Val.—*(aside)*—Support me gratitude, support me honour!—*(to her)*—Madam, in pity to a wrech who'd die to serve you, think upon Adolphus! your cruelty to him, to me is torture, exquisite torture!

Ade. Most fatal error!

Val. O bid me be the blessed messenger of blessings to my prince!

Ade. What's the prince to me? my heart was never formed for royalty or pomp; upon the little vales and sweet descents of life it loves to meditate. You, sir,

as

as I've been told, boast not, or wish to boast, a haughty pedigree; your manners too are mild, gentle, and unassuming.

Val. Oh!—*(groans)*

Ade. If ever you should meet a kindred mind, that she might be your bride, and both be happy, pray's Adelaide!

Val. In pity hold, or I am lost for ever!

Ade. Had I been born some humble cottager, my soul and fortunes had been better suited; perchance had I been nursed upon thy forest, thou hadst not been a courtier.

Val. O duty, friendship, wide from thy path I stray, my passions lead and hurry me to ruin.

Ade.

Ade. Am I the fatal cause of thy complaining?

Val. Thou art.

Ade. Then I will die to expiate my offence!

Val. Too sure thou art, the fair, the fatal cause of my destruction; thy perilous charms have stolen upon my heart, put out the lamp of caution, and robbed me of mine honour!

Ade. Valvaise, you hate me!

Val. Syren, I love thee! even to madness love thee; and now thou'st wrung the secret from my soul, detest, and hate me for a villain!

Ade. No, I will ever honour and revere thee.

Val. Impossible! it were contamination

nation of thy brightest virtues but to hold converse with me.

Ade. Can virtue tarnish virtue?—th generous struggle, even at this moment, is more than virtue.

Val. I bless thee for the hint;—it shews me that I'm not a criminal so black as he who sacrilegiously roots from his conscience all principles of friendship, honour, and gratitude, without remorse or shame.

Ade. Oh, do not look so terrible!—may we not yet be happy?

Val. If it be happiness to part for ever, oh, we shall be most happy.—*(wringing his hands distractedly.)*

Ade. Part! must we part?—and didst thou say for ever!

Val.

Val. Alas! too sure for ever and for ever!

Ade. Forbid it heaven! give me but chaste authority to hold thee, and let the stroke of death alone divide us.

Val. Thy sweet concessions 'stead of shedding balm, hurries me headlong down perdition's gulph! Absence from thee must kill me, but absence only can wash away my guilt.

Ade. Now to the humble object of compassion I feel myself abas'd. Yes, sir, you saw my weakness, and in pity said you loved me; 'tis time the mask should drop, to wear it longer is cruelty, not pity; more merciful it were to pluck up by the roots each tender hope, thy words, thy looks, had planted in my bosom. Say, Adelaide, I hate thee, nor

leave or branch, or blossom, to shelter me from wretchedness.

Val. Feel only pity for thee! and wear the mask of passion!—wou'd it were but a mask, that I might tear it off, and give my soul repose!

Ade. Unkind Valvaise!

Val. And is it Adelaide that bids me say I hate her?—she to whose ease, safety, or happiness, were my poor life but held in competition; that life I'd part with as freely as the infant throws away the bauble he is sick of. Dear soul, you wrong me!

Ade. In that thou say'st I wrong thee my heart is comforted.

Val. Dark dæmon of despair, I fall thy victim! Adolphus—

Ade. Adolphus, thou hast said, is mercy'

mercy's self; sure if he is the least of kin to mercy, he will forgive the involuntary crime of which we both are guilty.

Val. Hear, most ador'd of women, the last resolves of my aspiring honour, and bless them with thy sanction.

Ade. Speak, and teach me how to deserve thee!

Val. Were heaven this moment open'd to my view, its powers, its glories, all its blessedness, offered to my acceptance, I would not purchase the possession of them at cost of that friend's peace to whom I owe the being what I am, or at the dearer price of treason to my prince. Regret eternal would be my bitter por-

tion, and heaven to such a wretch would be no heaven.

Ade. Assist me, fortitude, to rival this the best-lov'd of thy sons. Woes me! how hard my fate, to doat upon those virtues that destroy me. Yes, we will be the willing victims to stern honour's laws, and dare to be unhappy. Let Adelaide and all her wishes perish, so that Valvaise but lives renowned through ages.

Val. Exquisite greatness! Whilst I have strength and resolution left receive my last adieu.

Ade. For ever, must it be for ever!— *(weeps.)*

Val. Necessity compels! Hold back thy precious tears in pity to my woes; nor let the ambitious lily drive from thy beauteous

cheek, the bloom of opening roses, late its competitor. Alas! the pangs of separation is too much for human fortitude, and I am less than man!

Ade. To man thou art superior; I the simplest, weakest, of my sex; O teach me to support it!

Val. Fain would I teach thee, when I'm far away, to look with favour on your royal lover!

Ade.—*(interrupting him)*—Hold, sir, you go too far! never again presume to name a deed so foul, so hateful; she who can divide her *vows* and her *affection* is *legally abandoned.*

Val. Forgive the crime which gratitude occasioned; so deep I feel my obligations to Adolphus, that, strike me,

Heaven, if at the price of all my soul ho'ds dear, I would not purchase happiness for him.

Ade. Now let us part, for now I can support it.

Val. My heart already is too deeply freighted with affliction, and can you add the curse of your displeasure?

Ade. No more, I do beseech you, of the king; nor wound a delicacy not lessened by the preference it has own'd for thee by ought obnoxious to its nature.

Val. Adolphus! alas! Adolphus!

Ade. Again!

Val. The wretch who stains his impious hands with blood, does even in sleep betray his guilty horrors; his words, his

his actions, cry out the murderer—should I be more at peace?—Oh no! My prince's peace I have most basely murdered!

Ade. The crime belongs to both, so mutual be our punishment.

Val. On thee may heaven pour down its choicest blessings—on my devoted head fall all its vengeance!—Now Adelaide!

Ade. One moment, one little moment longer.

Val. Passion would root me ever on this spot; but, ah! it cannot be! Dear soul, farewel.

Ade. What leave me thus! without one last adieu; the memory of which in life I'd cherish, nor even in death relinquish.

Val. 'Tis horror to approach thee! yet for one dear embrace I'd sacrifice more lives than I have counted moments.

Ade.—*(bursting into tears)*—Now modesty forgive this one offence, and mercy blot it from the book of heaven!

—*(she embraces him)*

[*Alleran unobserved by them enters and retreats hastily, with passionate gestures. Valvaise retreats from her embrace, kneels, kisses her hand, presses it to his bosom, and then in speechless agony exits.*

Ade. Ah, he is gone, for ever, ever gone! I'm sick at heart. Gone, gone, for ever! [*Exit.*

Enter

Enter at the opposite door Alleran, his sword drawn.

Alle. Cursed fortune, he's fled, and thou hast trick'd me. Fool-like I sought a weapon to chastise him, mean-while thou hid'st the villain from my vengeance; my groom and horsewhip would have better suited his insolent presumption. Confusion on the dog! I'll cut him in piece-meal! damn him at every stroke! and o'er the bosom of his mother forest, scatter his mangled limbs! Monarchs wou'd scarcely bend to mix with us, and shall a shepherd's boy, a beggar's brat, unite him to our house?—Now, by my soul, I'd rather my abandoned sister were buried quick, that worms might feed upon her living flesh,

than see what I have seen. Adolphus doats upon the vile plebean, and if he durst, would give him fellowship upon his throne! suppose he has engaged his minion to this pursuit, suppose the blow my honour has received, deriv'd from him! Deep as hell I'll dive for this accurs'd mystery, and meditate revenge, under a mask so thick, as demons shall not look through!" [*Exit.*

ACT

ACT III.

SCENE.—*A beautiful and extensive Garden, belonging to the Palace.*

Adolphus discovered, walking in a musing attitude, between the trees; he comes forward, and looks at his watch.

Adol. My love and my impatience poor time, have crippled thee, thy motion is so slow thou lack'st the aid of certainty to prop thee! possess'd of Adelaide, then shall I complain thou fliest too fast away; still court thy pre-

sence; bless each passing moment, wish for no heaven beyond what thou hast brought me, nor think eternity too broad a space for happiness like mine—who counts, as I do, the treasures of a faithful friend and peerless mistress are rich indeed. Friendship or love, with sober moderation, such as take not root deep in the souls of affection, my heart disdains to offer or accept.

Enter Alleran, disordered.

How now, sir, what means this bold intrusion?

Aller. If I were sure the lightining of thy eyes would strike me dead, sire, I would speak my wrongs.

Adol. Thy words, though something lacking

lacking of respect, bespeak a soldier's spirit. Who art thou?

Aller. My liege, I am a soldier, one who to this moment would not have grudg'd the last drop in his veins to serve you faithfully.

Adol. And hast thou found us wanting to reward thy services?—Speak, thou shalt be redress'd.

Aller. Reward I seek not.

Adol. What then?

Aller. Justice, sir, justice on a villain!

Adol. The father of his people is God's vice-gerent, who, by divine authority, punishes the guilty, and support the injur'd, therefore proceed, and fear not our dispelasure.

Aller.

Aller. Then by that God, of whom thou hitherto hast been the fairest and most perfect of all human models, say, I conjure your highness, has Valvaise, the creature of thy bounty, visited my sister, and told her tales of love by thy permission.

Adol. Who is thy sister?

Aller. Daughter of your late old faithful servant, the Count of Bernham, her family's disgrace, and a foul stain upon her sex's honour!

Adol. Her name?

Aller. Adelaide.

Adol. You are too rash!

Aller.—(kneeling)—Never will I leave thy royal feet, till thou dost bid me take sweet vengeance of my foe.

Adol.

Adol.—*(smiling(*—Prove him such, and take it.

Aller.—*(rising)*—And if I do not prove Valvaise a villain, let my prince degrade me from his service, and banish me his presence.

Adol. Suspicion and revenge are evil counsellors, admitted to the bosom of a soldier. I tell thee, boy, thou hast more cause for joy than sadness, and him thou call'st thy foe, is of all men the friend who serv'st thee best.

Aller. Sire, he has dar'd to woo a daughter of our house, and by his suit disgrac'd us!

Adol. Thou art possess'd of too much haughtiness, a quality of base import, if carry'd to excess, no greater fault we see; thy soul seems honest, and for thy sister's

sake we'll take thee to our confidence, even thy ambition shall be gratified.

Aller. And by thy graciousness so must be my vengeance.

Adol. Must I repeat, Valvaise is not thy foe; true, he woo's thy sister, but for us he woo's her.

Aller.—(starting)—Ah!

Adol. And this night, but lock the secret in thy inmost soul, this night the lovely Adelaide shall be our bride and queen.

Aller. Then doubly are they damn'd.

Adol. Bold wretch, art thou insane? —Or must we punish thy audacity?

Aller. Death! death! my lord, for mad I am not.

Adol. Dreams of horrible foreboding assail my soul! What hast thou said?

Aller.

Aller. Instantly Adolphus kill thy slave, or bid thy army chain me to a rock with bars of adamant, if thou would screen the villain from my rage! You are abus'd, betray'd, my royal master, and the glory of my sister basely tarnish'd.

[*Whilst he is speaking, Adolphus's attitudes are full of agony, and his countenance collecting rage.*

Adol. Swear thou hast seen Valvaise but look with passion on her!

Aller. Let me out-live my strength, and die an infant, let my courage fail, and cowards spit upon me, but I have seen the viper in thy royal bosom warm'd, press'd in a wanton's arms, and feeding on her smiles!

Adol. Then hear me, heaven, bear witness

witness to my vow! for every word, or look, or act of kindness, I have wasted on the traitor his soul's best blood shall pay me drop by drop.

Aller. Yet spare him, I do beseech your majesty, spare him a little life, that when thou art satisfied, I too might glut my vengeance.

Adol. I'm robb'd of all my treasures!

Aller. I'm robb'd of more than honour!

Adol. Support me, heaven!

Aller. Revenge me, heaven!

Adol. One tear to friendship, one to love I'll spare, then act the tyrant.

Aller. When the accurs'd pair, in league of treachery, conspir'd against their

their prince, no sigh of pity, no tear of penitence, escap'd to plead for mercy.

Adol. Say not thou'st seen thy king human himself—'twas the last effort of expiring weakness.

Aller. I pray the last it may be!

Adol. We charge the doubt us not; —the fix'd decrees of fate are not more certain, or its arm more strong to execute, than thou shalt find Adolphus.

Aller. Make me the agent of thy glorious justice.

Adol. Go drag the perjur'd monster to our presence; in flames of injur'd majesty we'll dart upon him, whilst thou standest by, and smiling view his ruin.

Aller.

Aller. Suppose, my liege, afraid to meet the master he has wrong'd, the villain flies our search.

Adol. After him; and let our army be dispers'd, to chace him from his hold; place on his guilty head, if he be brought alive into our presence, three hundred thousand crowns; the half our kingdom we shou'd not think too much to purchase our revenge.

Aller. Thy greatness rises even above my hopes. Long live the king.

[*Exit.*

Adol. Too long he lives whose joys are all departed! How sweetly op'd the morning of my hopes, how bitterly it closes! Oh villain! villain!

[*Exit.*

SCENE

SCENE II.—*The Forest.*

Enter Valvaise disguised as a Peasant, attended by a Boy; they stop at the outside of a poor hut.

Boy. He chang'd his dwelling, 'cause the rain beat in o'night upon him; here stands his habitation.

Val. I thank thee, child;—there's money for a cake.

Boy God mend your condition, master. [*Exit.*

Val. And God alone can mend it;—to him all things are possible;—I am his creature wholly made up of sorrows; affliction's battery has open'd on my youth, and beat me to the earth. Of all my

friends my splendid fortunes made me Duplaise and Christein alone I hold the chosen of my heart; together we have shar'd our sportive hours, together trod the beaten path of learning; nor when Adolphus cast his royal eyes with favour on my lowness, did I forget the interest of those dear companions, but rais'd them high in honour; their grateful arms will open to receive; with them the the heavy burthen of my woes will find a sure asylum. But first, another duty, superior to the preservation of this wretched self, demands my care.—*(knocks at the door of the hut)*—This letter to the king old Marcus shall convey, and then come what will come.—*(knocks again)*—My evil stars pursue me,

me, and even bar the low abode of poverty against my entrance.—*(knocks more loud, and calls)*—What ho, within.

Enter Marcus from the Hut.

Mar. Who knocks and calls so loud?

Val. A friend.

Mar. Then welcome; but perchance I know you not.

Val. No matter, I come from one, a follower of the king, with whom thou talk'st this morning.

Mar. What news of him?—He was a glorious youth.

Val. He greets thee lovingly, and does request thou wilt away to court.

Mar.

Mar. For why and wherefore, pray you?

Val. To give into the king's own hand this letter.

Mar. I'd serve him with my life, but how can such as I approach the king?

Val. Attend to-morrow, when his majesty, as weekly is his custom, gives audience to his people of all conditions; there on thy knee present it.

Mar. I'll do it, though I'm sure he'll spurn me with his foot.

Val. Fear not, thy white and reverend head will gain thee much respect.

Mar. Return, and tell thy master, with my most humble duty, I shall obey him, and my blessing into the bargain, be sure you give him that.

Val.—(taking a bag from under his coat)—

coat)—This token of his love by me he sends thee, to pave the road of thy old age with comfort.

Mar.—(looking on the bag with surprize)—Pray what may it contain?

Val. It is much beneath thy worth, but all that he could spare—two thousand pieces.

Mar. Two thousand pieces!

Val. He grieves it is no more.

Mar. Two thousand pieces!—and grieves it is no more!

Val.—(embracing him)—But with it this embrace he also sends thee, to make the trifle more acceptable.

Mar. Oh, rare perfection! Oh, marvellous young man! Two thousand pieces!

Val. Most fervently he prays thou may'st with health enjoy them.

Mar. All! must I take all?

Val. 'Tis all thy own. Farewell!

Mar. Yet stay awhile.

Val. What would'st thou?

Mar. Twenty are more than my few wants do crave, take thou the rest.

Val. I dare not —Good, man farewell!

[*Exit.*

Mar. By my troth he's vanish'd. Suppose he comes to tempt my honesty? —His eyes look'd all on fire, his hair stood up, and, to my thinking, poor soul, his voice sounded as if he'd newly escap'd from torments;—but then this letter—if he had been the devil or a ghost, how could he bring this letter, and bid me give it to the king?—Two thousand pieces!

pieces!—Well, if it be the devil, old Marcus fears him not, if man, he will restore his gold untouch'd.—*(goes into the hut, bearing the bag)*

SCENE III.—*Changes to the Countess of Barnham's House.*

Enter Countess, followed by Adelaide and Emmeline.

Count. Silence, I'll hear no more.

Ade. Yet pardon me, my mother.

Eme. Dear mother, pardon her.

Count. Have done, I say.

Ade. Pity your wretched child.

Eme. Witness her tears, and let them quench your anger.

Count. Ungracious girl!

Adel. Spare, spare my sister! she has not offended.

Count. Low grov'ling wretch, who might'st have been a queen, dar'st thou to plead for others whose own crime is so great?

Ade. Much as I fear a parent's dread displeasure, and highly as I rate my filial duty, though anguish be my everlasting portion, and those dim eyes never again behold their earthly treasure, my soul repents not what my tongue has utter'd.

Count. Audacions brat! Are these the fruits of all my arduous cares, daily instruction, anxious sleepless nights? —A glorious harvest truly, when for our best labour we reap but disobedience.

Emme.

Emme. Madam, we do acknowledge all your goodness, but for the love of heaven, with compassion look upon your daughters!

Ade. Oh, turn not thus away from Emmeline!—I, only I, am guilty.

Emme. Speak peace to both, or misery to both.

Count. Than both be—

Emme.—*(Adelaide and Emmeline falls upon their knees)*—Curse not your children.

Count. Rebels! I have no children!

Enter Alleran.

Alle. Madam, behold a son, who will repair the foul disgrace our honor has receiv'd.

Count. Dear boy, support thy mother; I will not have a pardon wrested from me!

Aller.—*(offering his hand insultingly to Adelaide)*—This posture ill becomes a mighty queen; let me assist you, madam.

Ade.—*(rising, as does Emmeline)*—Brother you see before you an object more of pity than resentment.

Count. Say, is the traitor taken?

Aller. Such toils are laid, as must ensnare him quickly.

Ade. Woe's me!

Emme. Brother, most cruel brother!

Aller. The just and great Adolphus pants to execute upon the traitor execrable vengeance!

Ade.

Ade.—*(leaning against the scene)*—Come death, for now I seek thee.

Aller. This is well acted, my most loving sister.

Count. You have deserv'd and must sustain his anger.

Emme. Shame, shame upon you, sir, —you are not Alleran ;—our brother Alleran was generous, merciful, and loved his sisters.

Aller. Who am I then ?

Emme. It seems as though thou wert some evil spirit, who had assum'd his form.

Aller To what intent?

Emme. To make the innocent bosom heave with sighs, to draw the salt tears from the aching eyes of sorrowing

distress, that thou might'st feed upon them.

Count. Peace, peace, I charge thee!

Emme. Oh, madam! look upon my dying sister; could any but a fiend add sorrow to her sorrows?

Aller. I have been better taught in schools of war than e'er to waste my rage in impotence; words are the harmless common cannon ball of women, and leave no scar behind.

Emme.—(going up to Adelaide)—How fares my dearest sister?

Aller.—(following her with an air of insult)—How fares my virtuous sister?

Ade. Sir, you attack a feeble adversary; I've nought but tears to offer in defence.

Aller. Sweet innocent! as yet you have

have no cause for tears; first see your minion stretch'd, upon the rack, observe his wreathing limbs, his throws of agony, receive in thy ears his dying groans, then shed them freely!

Ade. Oh! hide me, hide me!—*(faints and falls)*

Count. Hot-headed boy, thou'st kill'd her.

Emme. Help, help.—*(both kneel and assist her.)*

Aller. A love qualm.—Damn the villain! damn him!

Count. Son, son, thy cruelty has gain'd for her that pardon which to her prayers and tears I had deny'd.

Aller. Madam, it matters not though *you* forgive the wanton, it

shall not spoil the sport of my revenge. [*Exit in a rage.*

Emme. See, see, she breathes: and can you, dearest madam, pardon us?

Count. Pray heaven my pardon may not come too late. How are you, sweet one.—*(lifting up Adelaide.)*

Ade.—*(distracted)*—On beds of roses, lay him softly down, for ah, he bleeds to death!

Emme. Good God, she raves!

Count. Alas, my child, my poor distracted child!

Ade. By all the powers above I'm innocent! Hold off, my cruel brother, sir, you shall kill me first!

Count. Let thy afflicted mother conduct thee hence; thy Emmeline, thy gentle

gentle Emmeline, see how she weeps for thee.

Emme. Speak to me, my sister!

Ade. Poor, poor, Valvaise! but if he only sleeps, let me watch by him, hush, hush!

Count. We'll bring thee to him.

Ade. Softly, softly!

[*Exit, stepping cautiously, supported by the Countess and Emmeline.*

END OF ACT THE THIRD.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A thick dark Wood.—Thunder and Lightning.*

Enter a Serjeant and three Soldiers.

Serj. A murrain on the dog! I'd not budge my halbert's length, but for the reward of taking him.—*(Thunders)*

1*st. Sold.* There's peppering work a' t'

2*na. Sold.* Is there no better path?

Serj. Go on; we're near Duplaise's

house, where it is respected this here Valvaise has be-shelter'd himself.—*(Thunders)*—Go on, I say.

2nd Sold. Go you first, serjeant, 'tis our place to follow.—*(Thunders)*

Serj. By your leave, gentlemen, we are all equal on a march.

3rd Sold. Follow me, I know a nearer way. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*The outside of Duplaise's House.*

Re-enter Soldiers.

1st Sold. Peace is proclaimed in the clouds, for we hear no more of their drums.

2nd. Sold. 'Twas a fearful cannonading, serjeant?

Serj.

Serj. Fellow, I scorn thy words!—Who dares to call me coward, I'll eat him at a mouthful!

2nd Sold. Did I?

Serj. Thou thought'st it.

2nd Sold. Why eat me then.

Serj. Eat thee!—I'd rather eat a sparrow.

3rd Sold. Gentlemen, for shame! be friends;—shall private quarrels take place of state affairs.

1st Sold. Whist! whist!—I see a man.

Valvaise appears from another path.

All. Seize him! seize him!

Serj.—*(going up to Valvaise; soldiers surrounding him)*—Stand! and surrender thy dirty carcase to his majesty's arms.

Val.—*(affecting simplicity)*—A terrible storm!

Serj. Who art thou?—Whence com'st thou?

Val. It burst so sudden, I thought it would have crush'd me.

1st Sold. He's hard of hearing.

2nd Sold. We'll pick his ears with our bayonets.

Serj—*(in a loud voice)*—I ask thee in the king's name if thou hast met with ever a traitor in thy way?

Val. Sun-shine is soon over, and clouds succeed it;—happiness is not to be measured by time, because there are no rubs to mark its periods.

All A fool! a fool!

Val. It soars on eagle's pinions, and rests on beds of violets.

3rd

3rd Sold. He talks like a poet.

Serj. Come, gentlemen, it is beneath our dignity to be seen talking with such a blockhead.

Duplaise enters from the House.

Dup. Sir, have you business this way?

Serj. We seek a traitor, but have only pick'd up a fool.

Val.—(looking at Duplaise)—If a man has one true friend he is rich!

Dup.—(aside)—It is his face, his voice! Friendship, like love, can see through all disguises.—*(aloud to Valvaise)*—My poor Tom, have I found thee!

Serj. You know him then.

Dup.

Dup. He is my own, a very harmless fool; I've miss'd him long, and fear'd he had been lost.

Val. The hare runs, the dogs pursue, he doubles, they scent; close, close your noses to the ground; close, close, or you lose him.

Serj. Did you ever hear such damned stuff?

Dup. It has been his humour to smatter sentences.

1*st Sold.* 'Tis a funny dog. Wilt away with us, and serve the king.

Serj. I've fools enough already under my command.

Dup.—*(taking Valvaise by the hand)* —Sir, I shall not let thee loose again.

Serj. Who are you, master?

Dup. By what authority do you ask?

Serj.

Serj. By his majesty's authority.

Dup. You're his officer then?

Serj. I am.

Dup. As such I honour you, and shall answer any question you shall be pleas'd to ask me.

Serj. It is my pleasure that you tell me, who and what you are.

Dup. My name's Duplaise's; I'm lord of this fair castle, and no mean servant of our gracious master.

Serj. Than by my halbert, brother servant, I'm bound on matters of state, to that same castle of yours.

Dup. Whatever be your errand, you and your comrades shall be most kindly welcome; follow and I will conduct ye.

Serj.

Serj. This is right nobly said, and very gentlemanly-like civility ; his majesty shall know it.

[*Exit Duplaise, Valvaise, and Soldiers.*

SCENE III.—*Changes to the inside of the House. A Room, with a Table, on which are Bottles and Glasses.*

Re-enter Duplaise, Valvaise, and Soldiers.

Dup.—*(thrusting Valvaise into a closet)*—Thy hide shall smart for this. Stay there, fool, till I get a whip to scourge thee.—*(locks the door)*.

Soldiers. Ha ! ha ! ha !

Dup. Sirs, you may perceive, as yet,

I have not drank my grace-cup, voices below my window call'd me away before my lips had touched it, I hop'd it was my fool, and luckily I found him. Please heaven, I'll take brisk vengeance on the bottle, so will we all my friends; good company gives relish to good liquors; I trust ye are no flinchers.

Serj. Not I, except on duty.

1st Sold. Hang duty, let us drink.

2nd Sold. Let duty do itself, I'm for drinking.

3rd Sold.—*(sings)*—Drinking is the soldier's pleasure.

[*Whilst they are speaking, Duplaise, unperceived, fills something from a small viol, into each of their glasses.*

Dup.

Dup. Brave, thou art fit to drink with Alexander; thy hand, my honest fellow, here's to our better acquaintance.—*(Drinks)*—Come, captain, will you pledge us?

Serj. A proper gentleman, as ere I met withal. Here's towards your health.—*(Drinks)*

Soldiers. Here's to your honour's health.—*(Drinks)*

Serj. Soldiers take care and comport yourselves soberly, or I'll have you shot for desertion.

1*st Sold.* There's no desertion in the case, for I know all the articles of war.

Dup. Which amongst you dare refuse to drink confusion to his majesty's enemies?—Captain you must second me.

Serj.

Serj. That will I, and hope my company are no rebels ; here then it goes.

[*All drink.*

1*st Sold.* Shan't we drink confusion to his friends as well as his enemies ?

Dup. Sirs, be seated all, and each man take his glass; good wine and loyal healths ye shall not lack, find you but courage.

[*They all sit.*

Serj. 'Sblood, who shall doubt the courage of the king's troops !

Dup.—*(filling a large glass)*—I challenge ye, my friends, to pledge me in this glass.

Serj. What does it hold ?

Dup. A single pint, no more ; that soldier who cannot carry thrice as much over

over a packthread line, shall never weild a truncheon.

Serj. Fill it to the brim; it is my office to stand in front of battle.

Soldiers. Let us follow your example, noble serjeant.

Dup.—(filling three other glasses)—Ye shall, my glorious lads; so brave a commander deserves to be bravely supported.

[*All but Duplaise toss off their pint glasses.*

Serj. What is to be done about this here same Valvaise?—If we had him in chains I would not value a dozen bottles.

Dup. I'll help you to find him.

Serj.—(drowsy and yawning)—Have you heard any thing about the traitor?

Dup.

Dup. Some scoundrel, I suppose, who has deserted.

Serj.— *(yawning)*—No, no such thing.

Dup. Pray then inform me better.

Serj. Speak you Archer, I'm damnably sleepy.

1st Sold.—*(rubbing his eyes)*—Have you never a bed in your house?

Dup. These forc'd marches have overmuch fatigued you; gentlemen, in this room,—*(throwing open a door)*—you may all lie down, and find the sweet repose you stand in need of—*(pushes them in, and locks the door; then returns, opening the room in which Valvaise is secured)*—Come forth thou best of men, the enemy are fast, the course is clear, and

and friendship's arms are open to receive thee.

Valvaise enters from the Closet; they embrace.

Val. I thank thee, fate, that thou restorest one jewel to my sight; all other comforts having ravish'd from me!

Dup. I ask not why degraded thus I see you, or why proclaim'd a traitor; command my services, my sword, my life, and make me more thy debtor.

Val. Thy words balsamic to any but a soul so deeply wounded, might work a cure; the smart I feel admits not even of mitigation.

Dup. Just now my servant from the

city came, and with him brought tidings confus'd and horrible.

Val. What said he of the wretch most wretch'd.

Dup. That he had seen thy honor'd name most shamefully disgrac'd and post'd for a traitor; that thou had'st fled the fury of thy prince, and in disguise this morning left the court.

Val. Said he aught more?

Dup. Too much! but nothing more.

Val. Oh then, my friend, I have a tale to tell thee.

Dup. Within I'll hear it; a poor repast awaits you, snatch it in haste, for know the morrow's sun must not rise upon Valvaise.

Val. How knew you of my coming hither?

Dup.

Dup. My heart, proud of its alliance with thy heart, boldly presum'd you would not leave the kingdom without one short farewell.

Val. Most generous soul.

Dup. Therefore I watch'd for thy approach with more than woman's longing; alarmed by voices near my house, I hasten'd out, and found thee by thy foes environ'd; you parried them with stratagem, and I with stratagem have bound them fast; but we, alas! must part, the day wears rapidly.

Val. Conduct me as thou wilt.

Dup. Would I could lodge thee safely as that thou art warmly in my bosom lodg'd.

Val. Far from a home so hospitable, far I bear my griefs, a heavy burthen,

in my life's web woven, of which I fain would rid me.

Dup. Once more I must remind my guest belov'd, my honor'd benefactor, of time's elopement. A stout and faithful escort are prepar'd to guard thy steps, till every danger of pursuit be pass'd.

Val. I'd rather give my body to the rack than thou should'st guard the traitor, and perchance share in a traitor's fate; enough that in my crimes I've plung'd the loveliest of her sex; wish me not more guilty, talk not of guards, good soul; lest you to madness drive me.

Dup. Then be it as thou wilt; to heaven and all its hosts of angels I commend thee Nor shalt thou know of any human aid, that waits upon thy safety.—*(aside)*

Val.

Val. Thy prayers I'll not refuse; an army could not help me, but in the prayers of righteous men, I have much faith. One last embrace from Christein, whom next to thee I love, this night I'll snatch, then weep a sad farewell to thee, to him, and Sweden.

Dup. My soul weeps blood for thee and for thy woes!

Val. I'd give thee comfort, but in truth I am myself a bankrupt; once I was rich in comforts, now have not where withal to raise one chearful thought! But come, my friend, let's eat and drink together; I do accept most thankfully your loving bounty, for even sorrow's hunger.

Dup.—(bursting into tears, and in

a faint voice)—Give me thy hand. Oh, God! I cannot bear to look upon thee!

[*Exeunt.*

Scene IV.—*A Room in the Palace.*

Enter Adolphus and Alleran.

Adol. Has every house been search'd?

Aller. Nor house, nor hovel, has escap'd, so please your majesty.

Adol. Thy diligence well pleases me, but by thy ill success I am discomforted.

Aller. Unless he's ta'en up alive to heaven, Alleran's enemy shall not be hid from Alleran.

Adol.—*(scornfully)*—Thy enemy!

Aller. And your's, my liege.

Adol.

Adol. Thy enemy!

Aller. For that he has betray'd my royal master, and seduc'd my sister, my enemy I call him.

Adol. It would bespeak more modesty, placing thy high self second in a cause wherein thy king is injur'd.

Aller. Pardon, I pray your majesty, the errors of my nature.

Adol. Thy nature is too full of self.

Aller. By nature am I—

Adol.—(interrupting him sternly)— No more playing with words, lest they prove dangerous weapons, and turn their edge upon thee.

Aller. Beseech your highness give me my dismission.

Adol. Know, haughty sir, as thou dost boast thy prowess, we'll put it to the test!

Within ten days produce Valvaise, who stands impeached by thee, or, failing, we do banish thee from Sweden.

Aller. If between heaven and hell he loiters I'll roam no banish'd man!

Adol. Go, and learn humility.—*(Exit Alleran)*—A boisterous tempest rages in my soul, I've us'd him hardly, but he presum'd too much; his spirit will not ride the worse for curbing; whence from his presence arise this hurricane of passions that overturn all gentleness of temper?—he robb'd me not of friendship—he robb'd me not of love;—true—but he was first to ope my closed eyes, and glare the ruin on me; if for this I hate him, when thou arch traitor didst steal away my peace, with it thou didst purloin humanity and justice.

Enter

Enter an Attendant, followed by Emmeline, dressed in Boy's cloaths.

Attend. So please your majesty, this clamourous stripling, spite of my efforts to resist his boldness, has forc'd a passage to your sacred presence, on business, as he does pretend, of mighty import.

Adol. With-draw; we'll give him hearing. [*Exit Attend.*

Adol.—(to Emmeline, whose eyes are cast upon the ground)—Fear not, what would'st thou?—Look up, poor child.

Emme.—(kneeling)—My sight unus'd to objects so sublime, wants strength to meet refulgent majesty;—I'm not an eagle to gaze upon the sun!

Adol. Nor is my soul attun'd to har-

mony, and yet thy notes have touch'd it. Prythee arise.

Emme.—(rising, her eyes still fixed on the ground)—Oh, could I touch it with compassion too, I'd call thee more than king, and worship thee as holy saints are worship'd.

Adol.—(looking at her, starts, as surprized)—What do I see !

Emme. Alas ! I have offended.

Adol. Again let me examine thee !—*(fixing his eyes an her face)*—Here I behold, as in a faithful mirror, a semblance so fair, so fatal to my heart, as at the price of precious memory, I wou'd abolish hence.

Emme. I will withdraw my prayer, since my unhappy person disgusts your majesty.

Adol.

Adol. Thy countenance and soul hold no alliance; if thou can'st ask of me ought that I should refuse thee.—Speak on.—I will be calm!

Emme. This graciousness is more than I can bear My liege, I have a sister!

Adol. Why dost thou weep and tremble?—I've said I will be calm.—What of thy sister?

Emme. She, my lord, unwillingly, uncaution'd, in an evil hour, bestow'd her virgin heart upon a youth in birth below her level, in all besides, love taught her to behold in him more than her equal; meantime, the first and best of all God's creatures, descending from his greatness, woo'd her to be his bride.

Adol.—(agitated)—Your tale conveys a plummet through my heart, that the

likeness too so strong, by heaven! 'tis more than likeness! the self-same image, sounds it to the deep! Call not those rivals friends, lest I should think thou mock'st me.

Emme. Alas! they were!

Adol. Begone! Yet stay. Sharp daggers are conceal'd in thy smooth words, but thou dost plant them with so sweet a grace, that I must hear thee.

Emme. More I fear to speak.

Adol. On thy life I charge thee, explain, to my confusion, whom dost thou call thy sister.

Emme. One, who being guided by blindfold fancy, true judgment left behind, for want of whose support she stumbl'd, fell, and lies a prey to madness —Adelaide is my sister!

Adol.

Adol. Hold, hold, my brain! 'tis madness but to look upon thy face, so like my Adelaide; it speaks thou art a branch of that fell house from which my woes are dated.

Emme.—(bowing her head low, and crossing her arms on her breast)— The youngest of that sad and sorrowing house am I. Oh mercy! mercy!

Adol. For whom dost thou entreat it?

Emme. For Adelaide, the veriest wretch of wretches.

Adol. She never show'd me mercy.

Emme. Poor soul! had she had mercy on herself, your highness had no cause of 'plaint against her. Oh, miserable, that to herself she lack'd it.

Adol. So much I do not blame her as I do hate the villain who did abuse my holy friendship; he was my second self, my dearer self; I lov'd him as a brother, yet he betray'd me.

Emme. Pardon! oh, pardon!

Adol. Pardon Valvaise!

Emme. To save my Adelaide.

Adol. Ha! thou mean'st to save Valvaise's Adelaide.

Emme. Her life is wrapp'd in his.

Adol. I thought thy voice had music in its notes, now to my ear it sounds worse than a raven's croaking.

Emme. Would that I were a syren to charm away your rage.

Adol. I do suspect thee for an hypocrite! So young, and yet so artful.

Emme. Witness my tears, I am no hypocrite!

Adol. Rash child! darest thou to meet my flaming wraths! darest thou to thrust thyself 'twixt me and vengeance.

Emme. Indeed, my lord, I dare not; one single frown would kill me.

Adol. Then get thee hence.

Emme. In others could I see mine own afflictions, from sympathy alone I should be wretched.

Adol. Were angels thus to plead, Valvaise should suffer.

Emme. Oh, grief of griefs!

Adol. Thy tears, and sobs, and sighs, are unavailing; wherever he is found the iron rod of mighty justice shall crush his treacherous soul.

Emme.—*(after a pause of deep sorrow)*—No more will I offend your royal

ear, yet if I may find grace for one poor boon, I fain would ask it.

Adol. Pardon for Valvaise excepted, I swear to grant thy suit.

Emme. Thanks to your gracious highness. Since I do fail, through fault of my expressions, to move thy noble soul to greater clemency, I humbly do beseech your majesty forget my bold presumption, nor speak my foolishness to those who have a right to my obedience; when I came hither my own weak heart, and weaker reason, were alone consulted, without a mother or a brother's sanction; now as I am in years a very child, in judgment a mere baby, if they should come to the knowledge of my rashness, I should incur their censure.

Adol. Would I could grant thee more

than

than thou dost ask. Proud Alleran I like not, but in thy humour there is a gentleness, an infantine simplicity, that draws thee to my heart. Depart in peace, thy secret we will keep religiously.

Emme, So may heaven reward thy princely bounty.

Adol. To the same protection we commend thy youth, thou fair resemblance of my soul's dear idol.

[*Exit severally.*

END OF ACT THE FOURTH.

ACT

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Draws and discovers Adolphus giving audience to the Populace assembled. The whole Stage, on this occasion, being laid into a magnificent Presence Chamber. Adolphus is seated under a Canopy of State, upon a Throne raised two Steps. Lords and Attendants ranged on each side.*

Adol.—(coming down from his throne) —If any yet remain unsatisfied, let him come forward.

Multitude

Multitude—(shouting)—Long live the father of his people!

Adol. We thank our loving subjects, whose rights we dearly cherish.

Multitude—(again shouting)—Long live your majesty!

Adol.—(observing Marcus pushing through the crowd—Make room there, the steps of age are slow.

1st Lord. Fall back!

2nd Lord. Room, I say make room.

3rd Lord. He hobbless like the eldest son of time

Adol. It pleases me to look upon his reverend silver locks and venerable visage. You push him rudely, this way conduct him.

Mar.—(coming forward)—Which I pray you may be the king's majesty, for here,

here, to my worn sight, seem many kings.

Adol. I am he.

Mar. God prosper then your god-like majesty,—*(trying awkwardly to kneel)*

Adol.—*(stopping him)*—Good fellow, stoop not; already thou dost bend so near thy parent earth, as thou would'st kiss her bosom. What is thy petition?

Mar. Nothing, so please your majesty.

Adol. What brings thee here if thou hast nought to ask?

Mar.—*(delivering a letter to the king)*—Something from heaven or hell, I know not which, did yesterday deliver to my hand this letter, with strict commands

mandment that I should bring it to your royal majesty.

Adol.—(looking at the superscription, starts.)—He who gave thee this no interest has in heaven! Withdraw—leave me all—not one remain behind.

[*Exit at one door Lords, &c. at another the Multitude.*

Adol.—(tearing open the seal with agitation) — Reads.— "That I have wronged thee, with a bleeding conscience, guilt wounded, at thy royal feet, covered with shame, contrition, and despair, I cast myself for mercy."—Apostate most accurs'd!—"My crime and perfidy I seek not to disguise, or ought extenuate."—O, rare and honest soul!—"My will against my will has injur'd thee."—Villain thou liest!—"I strove to serve thee but fell

fell in mine own weakness."—'Tis false as hell!—"Whilst with my tongue I pleaded for my king, those treacherous eyes, I fear, spoke for a traitor. Oh, think upon her beauties!"—Tortures!—"From thee and Adelaide I tear myself for ever, embracing misery, the only portion my soul does covet, on this side eternity."—*(pauses)*—"Thy gracious favor raised me high in honors—unworthy of thy friendship, I renounce them."—*(pauses)*—"Be you, my lord, your own best advocate with Adelaide, whilst I, the lowly mendicant of providence, will tax its bounty for no greater blessing, than knowing thou art blessed."—*(pauses.)*

Enter

Enter, abruptly, Alleran, followed by Christiern.

Aller.—(exultingly)—I come, my lord, to prove I am no boaster!

Adol. Humility, cloth'd in thy language, would seem like arrogance. Withdraw, our thoughts are busy.

Aller. Not unheard, beseech your majesty.

Adol. Speak briefly then.

Aller. The villain's ta'en, my liege.

Adol. Ah! say'st thou so; this is to the purpose. Thou say'st Valvaise is taken?

Aller. Taken, taken, my lord; taken in the very toil I set to trap him.

Adol.

Adol. Thy tidings are most welcome. Where hast thou left him?

Aller. Loaded with chains, and howling in a dungeon, he waits your royal pleasure.

Adol. Go bring him hither quickly.

Aller. Revenge shall lend me wings. Meantime, sire, this honest gentleman,—*(presenting Christiern)* will have the honor to inform your majesty more fully of our capture. [*Exit.*

Adol. Come on, sir, what is your intelligence?

Chris. Before your sacred majesty now stands the most attach'd and faithful of your subjects; one who in his fealty and duty to your royal person, has sunk all other duties.

Adol.

Adol. Your words do promise fairly—proceed.

Chris. Last night, or rather at the close of day, your servant Alleran, did by express inform me, Valvaise had fall'n under your high displeasure, instructing me to seize upon the traitor, if he did come to seek a refuge from me.

Adol. Fail'd he to give you information, how vast the sum we offer'd for his capture?

Chris. I am no stranger to your royal bounty.

Adol. 'Twas well done in him. Go on, sir.

Chris. Soon after that his messenger arriv'd, one ask'd to speak with me, I gave him entrance; in evil plight he

came; his garments poor and tatter'd, soak'd through with rain, so that I knew him not, 'till flying to my arms, he wept, he groan'd, and faint'd.

Adol. Your tale is wonderful.

Chris. Yes, my liege, it was Valvaise himself. I hugg'd him close till vital warmth return'd, then gave him entertainment.

Adol. Matchless! and seiz'd him for thy prisoner.

Chris. To break the tie of hospitality, that man does bind to man, the stronger tie of friendship to tear asunder, was not a task too difficult for Christiern, whereby to serve his prince.

Adol. Exquisite fidelity! How shall we reward thee?

Chris. Were I, a vile plebean, held wor-

worthy of nobility, sometimes to meet thy gracious eye in offices of duty—

Adol.—(interupting him)—Hold! we read thy wishes; trust to our royal word—thou shalt be exalted above all courtiers.

Chris. Most mighty and generous monarch!

Adol. No thanks; we are as yet thy debtor; but say, that I may know the sum of all I owe thee, what is the friendship, what is the gratitude, which thou to us have sacrificed.

Chris. Valvaise, my liege, I own it with confusion, because he is a traitor, from his infancy has own'd me for his friend, and call'd me brother of his heart's best love.

Adol. So much for friendship;—what on the score of gratitude?

Chris. So vast the sum I owe him, it goes beyond arithmetic to calculate.

Adol. Near as thou canst guess.

Chris. No morsel that I swallow, no domestic comfort, no honors or respect I call my own, but his favor with thy gracious royal self, procured these blessings for me.

Adol. Yet thou, for love and reverence of thy prince, in chains dost bring thy benefactor to tortures and to death.

Chris. It is thy servant's glory.

Adol. Amazing! most amazing proof of duty.—*(looking out of the door)*—Ah! fall back awhile, but do not quit our pre-

presence.—*(Christiern retires to a distant part of the stage)*

Enter Adelaide in deep mourning, her hair dishevelled; supported by the Countess and Emmeline, all covered with long veils; they all kneel.

Adol.—*(looking on them, particularly on Adelaide)*—When mortals offer up their orisons to heaven, no need to say from whom proceeds the prayer of their petition, but it is fitting that an earthly king should with the address receive the addresser's name and quality.

Count. So please your majesty I am the grief-worn widow of Count Bernham, this—*pointing to Adelaide)*—his

hapless daughter Adelaide, this Emmeline her sister.

Adol. Why make parade of grief? It would disgrace our manhood to behold ye thus; arise and know that majesty itself does homage pay to beauty.

Count. We know our duty to your high commands.

Ade. For ever let me kneel.

Emme. It best becomes her woes, and me it does become as heir to them—on me revert her sorrows!

Count. Rise daughters, I did inform you better.

Adol.—*(raising them)*—Two roses from one stock! Arise fair suns, whose radiant beams no clouds can e'er eclipse; those melancholy sables sweetly do

do mellow the brightness of your charms but not conceal them.

Ade. Would Adelaide had been the foulest daughter of deformity, rather than what she is.

Adol. Then Adelaide ungrateful is to nature!

Count. Beseech your highness treat her with compassion! The flower of her reason has been blasted.

Adol. If she be sad, I am dispos'd for sadness; mourns she an object on whom her soul did doat, torn from her fondest hopes?—for one as dear I mourn; laments she for a friend who has deceiv'd her?—so does Adolphus.

Ade. There is a difference wide in our conditions, wanting the power to save one single life, for which my

own I would lay down most freely, much cause I have for sadnesss; your majesty the fountain of all power, whose breath can raise the drooping soul; speak peace and pardon, for sadness have no cause!

Count. Beware of too great freedom.

Adol. Prevent her not I charge thee.

Ade. I mourn the fatal truth! an object on whom my soul does doat, torn from my fondest hopes; and yet our fates bear no similitude.

Adol. She whom my soul is robbed of, is fairer, sweeter, softer, than the morn, and yet you say I have no cause for sadness.

Ade. Alas! my liege, the humble maid

maid on whom your greatness lowered itself to look, heard with trembling apprehension the honour you design'd her; with reverence and gratitude she listen'd to the story of your passion, most eloquently told; reverence and gratitude was all that she could feel, her heart already conquer'd; yes, my lord, I lov'd and was belov'd. Say in our loves is there ought similar? Mutual must be the love that wounds to death!

Adol. Had I not seen that face, which though too late, thou now in pity hid'st, I could have listen'd coldly to thy pleading.

Ade. If you could hate me as I do hate myself, I'd count it for a blessing.

Adol. If you do love yourself as I do love you, yet we may be happy.

Ade. Despair inspires timidity with boldness! O king, to desperation I am driven! Talk not of happiness, *my* happiness is exil'd with Valvaise!

Adol. Valvaise returns from exile.

Ade. What blessed sounds are these?—Oh, mother, bend with me your honored knees! low, low, my sister, let us kiss the earth; his godlike goodness has recall'd Valvaise.

Count. Alas! poor child.

Emme. Dear wretched sister.—*(weeps)*

Ade. Why do you sigh and weep?—Has not Adolphus said it? Look on his awful countenance, deceit and cruelty mark not its characters, has he not said Valvaise returns from exile!

Adol. What if by compulsion?

Ade. Better we never meet!

Adol. Though it be, you may expect all justice.

Ade. The first and best of attributes divine is heaven-born mercy; on petty crimes, such as the will is not consenting to, justice looks down with pity.

Adol. Was it a petty crime to steal away your dear affection, which I so dearly priz'd?

Ade. Call it not theft, my lord, it was a gift I freely did bestow; he wooed me for his master, I wooed him for himself.

Adol. Was not he seen in your embraces?

Ade. No thought immodest ever stain'd my soul, yet I deny it not.

Adol. Press'd in thy beauteous arms, did he not swear he lov'd thee?

Ade. With torturing tenderness I wrung the secret from his honest soul—'twas all that I could do; true heart, he lov'd his royal benefactor more than his mistress, and for this cause forsook me! As he did cry adieu! my virgin arms extended of themselves, to take one last farewell; with horror he retreated; yes, my lord, with horror he did rend himself from my embrace, as though some venemous reptile had encircled him. Could I have made a transfer of my love from him to his Adolphus, we had all been happy.

Adol. Give me thy heart, and let him take my kingdom.

Ade. Ask the poor remnant of my

blighted days, to poison, poinards, tortures, I would yield them, my heart, my vows, I cannot.

Adol. Prepare then to receive this happy lover; and since you slight our offers, we best shall know how to reward your passion and his services.

[*Adelaide, wringing her hands, reclines on the bosom of Emmeline; the rattling of Chains heard faintly at a distance.*

Adol.—(apart to the Countess)—Retire your daughters, madam; I hear a sound that does portend no pleasing spectacle.

Count. Oh, miserable mother!

Adol.—(apart to her)—The storm that gathers o'er a traitor's head, forebodes

bodes to her no ill. To our closet, there wait our pleasure; flatter her hopes, our vengeance must be gratified, but soothe her gently.

Count.—(going up her daughters) —His majesty's commands are that awhile we leave him to reflection.

Ade.—(in the attitude of listening)— Again! hark, hark!—*(chains sound nearer)*

Emme.—(embracing her)—My dearest sister! what will become of her!

Count.—(drawing her to the door)— All will be well! all will be well, my children.

Ade. Here, here, my feet are rooted!

Enter

Enter at the opposite door Valvaise, guarded, and in Chains, preceded by Alleran, followed by Duplaise and Multitude.

Ade.—(screams, and rushes to Valvaise)—Thus do I behold my soul's dear lord! Oh, horror! horror!

Aller.—(pushing her rudely)—Off, off, thou shameless girl, or I will prick the bluest of thy veins– *(drawing his sword)*

Adol.—(angry)—This in our presence! put up, presumptuous boy!

Count. Grant her this small indulgence.

Aller. In that, I must! I must!— *(putting up his sword)*

Ade.

Ade.—(going up to Valvaise distractedly; he avoiding her)—Will you not look upon me?—Poor soul those chains do gall those precious limbs, yet Adelaide did forge them! Put them on Adelaide!—she will rejoice in them!—call them her jewels, her choicest ornaments!—'tis all that she would take from thee; all but the seeming guilt which wicked men do falsely charge thee with.

Val. In loving thee, I am a wretch most guilty.

Adol. And for this guilt thou by and by must answer.

Ade.—(kneeling frantically)—Beware, a drop of his most innocent blood you do not shed; 'twill print upon your soul a spot so red that years of penitence,

and

and rivers of salt tears, will not wash out.

Val.—(groans)—Oh !

Aller. This for a traitor !

Ade. Who calls him a traitor is himself a traitor ! Scar but his skin, pluck out a single hair from his just head, my prayers shall clamour heaven for vengeance ! vengeance !

Aller.—(forcing her to rise)—Vain babbler, you but retard the justice of our sovereign !

Emme. Fie ! fie ! upon you, brother !

Adol. Madam, convey your daughters to our closet; justice, in her mildest countenance, doth shew too much of sterness, for gentleness like theirs to look upon.

Ade. Oh, lead me hence ! Valvaise dis-

disowns me! Hide, hide me, from myself!

[*Exit Adelaide, supported by the Countess and Emmeline; Alleran looking after them with contempt and passion.*

Adol.—*(looking round him)*—Do any of our subjects here assembled, of tyranny, of acts ungracious, or cruelty accuse us? Our royal word we pledge, if he but prove the charge, we will no rancour bear him. If there be any that have complaint against us, let him forget we are his sovereign; whilst we unking ourselves, on equal terms to meet his accusation. Friends, ye are silent all! Stand we to you acquitted, as boldly we can say our conscience does acquit us? Are ye all satisfied?

Omnes.

Omnes. All! all!

Adol. As we have render'd justice to our subjects, we claim it for ourself, not as your prince, but fellow citizen; one who does hold it awfully tremendous to efface the image of the deity, however base the metal it be stamp'd on; yet crimes there are of such a heinous nature, 'twere impious not to punish them with death.

Aller. Most just and glorious prince!

Chris. A god! a god!

Adol. Blaspheme not heaven, nor with idolatry, by worship its feeble creature, subject to pain, to disappointment, to anger, and revenge.

Dup. Forbid him not, my liege, the only language his foul soul can utter.

Chris.

Chris. But for the king's presence, I would say thou liest!

Dup. But for the royal presence thou durst not look upon the man betray'd by thee most foully!

Chris. I hold my loyalty above all private obligations.

Val.—(to Duplaise)—Dear friend, you but protract the sentence, that shall release my soul from griefs accumulated, and these poor limbs from shackles that disgrace them.

Adol. Peace all of you!

Multitude. Silence! silence!

Adol. Which of you, having in your bosom cherish'd a subtle serpent, warm'd it into life, and fed it with your hand, if treacherously, with tooth envenom'd, he bites upon your flesh, would not throw

throw off the poisoning reptile, and crush it into atoms.

Val. O king! to give it instant death were glorious mercy.

Adol. Thy conscience cannot accuse thee!

Aller. In truth, my liege, you prick him to the quick.

Chris. The just reward of treason!

Adol. 'Tis boldness thus to interrupt our purpose.

Multitude. Silence! silence!

Adol. The man who turns with perfidy upon his bosom friend, his benefactor; forgetting that from nothing he did raise him, to rival him in honours; if he this bounty, friendship, and affection, repays with treachery, what shall be his reward?

Omnes. Death!

Adol. Some there are present whom we would singly ask.—*(addressing himself to Valvaise)*—What fate deserves this traitor?

[*Valvaise striking his bosom, crosses his arms, and remains silent, his his eyes cast upon the ground*

Omnes. Guilty! guilty!

Adol. His silence is enough.—*(to Duplaise)*—For thee who dar'st to own thy friendship for the prisoner we pass by. Alleran speak thou.

Aller. As mine enemy I hate him, and would, with good leave of your majesty, make mince-meat of him, but as a man, the forfeit of his life, as man, I would accept, were I to pass his sentence.

Adol.—(to Christiern)—What says the

the most attach'd and faithful of our subjects?

Chris. Let all who do offend thy sovereign greatness, into vast furnaces of boiling lead, living be headlong hurl'd; nor let his vile soul leave his tortur'd body, till sinews, bone, and marrow, be consum'd.

Adol. Well hast thou said, my honest gentleman; and far as it were possible the rigour of thy sentence should pass upon the caitiff now before us, but that our sacred word is lately pledg'd, above all other courtiers to exalt him.—*(Christiern looks confusedly)*—Away, ye idlers! quick erect a gibbet, high as a knave's ambition! to furnish it we'll send you out a precious villain! a traitor, to his God, his friend, and sovereign.

Multitude

Multitude. God save your majesty!

[*Exit Multitude.*

Adol.—(to Christiern)—Why does the gen'rous blood forsake thy cheek?

Chris. My lord, thy servant understands thee not.

Adol. Guards, seize your prisoner.—*(Guards lay hold of Valvaise*—Stand off! to touch him as a criminal were to profane all virtue!

Val. Oh, sport, far worse than death!

Dup. By heaven he sports not.

Adol. I do forgive your ignorance, in that ye know not this to be the traitor!—*(laying his hand on Christiern; the guards seize him)*

Dup. Godlike Adolphus!

Val. 'Tis insupportable!

Adol.

Adol.—(to Christiern)— Miscreant! what devil whisper'd in thy ear, that to disgrace humanity, would recommend thee to Adolphus' favor.

Chris. A devil it must be! a damn'd deceitful devil!

Aller. Consider, good, your majesty, if he did err it was to serve your highness.

Chris. Pardon, pardon.

Adol. A word unfit to couple with thy crimes.

Chris. This to the number!— *(breaking from the guards, he draws a poinard from his bosom, and strikes at the king; Alleran catches the blow on his hand. Guards surround and seize Christiern.*

Aller. Infernal villain!

Val. My soul does envy thee that precious scar!

Adol. Are ye much hurt?

Aller.—*(binding the wound with his handkerchief)*—Nothing, my gracious lord! a woman's needle would have done as much.—*(to Christiern)*—Monster, for this accurs'd deed, if hangmen fail, these hands shall tie thee up!

Dup. Or these, most willingly.

Adol. Away with him, our sight is blister'd by his presence.

[*Exit Christiern, guarded.*

Dup. This once I'll feast my eyes, to look upon thy exaltation.

[*Exit after him.*

Adol. Some of ye unloose that injur'd soul; fetters for vice were forg'd, and not for virtue.

Aller.

Aller.—(unbinding Valvaise's chains)—So great is your example, royal sire, that what I was the means of taking from him, thus I restore to him.

Adol. Now, Alleran, I love thee.

Aller. Justice, not friendship, put me on the office.

Val.—(falling at the king's feet)—Here be the duty of my first thanks paid; oh, God! belongs this flood of light to my benighted soul!

Adol.—(raising and embracing him)—Thus I restore thee to my heart's best lodging; the inmate that it holds, dearer than life or empire!

Val. I scarce can breathe! Be less yourself, my master, or you kill me!

Adol. Reason has thrown her bridle o'er my passions; no longer through

their partial optics, in thee behold I the enemy that would have robb'd me of my love, but that true friend, who to his own existence preferr'd my happiness.

Enter Countess, disordered, and in haste.

Count. Forgive, my liege, this seeming disobedience; alas! we could not hold her!

Adol. Ye are most welcome! Your presence opportune.

Ade.—(without)—I'll not believe ye! produce him! shew him to me!

Val. If I do look upon her again I am a traitor!

Enter

Enter Adelaide, followed by Emmeline.

Ade.—*(gazing on Valvaise)*—How pale it looks!

Emme. Woe's me!

Adol. Why gaze you thus with anguish on Valvaise?

Ade. Hold in my breath lest it dissolves in air!

Val. Oh, agony extreme!

Adol. It is no phantom, but your own Valvaise.

Ade. Did I not hear the cry of execution! did I not hear the shouting multitude, most cruelly exult when my dear love lay bleeding!

Val.—*(aside)*—Sweet, but most fatal passion!

Adol. Valvaise embrace the gentlest and the fairest of her sex. Nay, start not back.

Val. Great as I know your soul, my lord, I dare not!

Ade.—(starting)—Now, help me, heaven, it is his blessed voice!

Adol. Adolphus bids thee take her to thy arms; cherish her ever; and curs'd be he that would your chaste hearts 'sunder!

Val. That I do love her, witness heaven and earth! yet I do love her happiness more than her person; nor will I yield my soul to joys transporting, at your expence, my dear and generous master.

Ade. 'Tis strange! 'tis wonderful!

Adol. He is but half a victor, who conquers

out by halves; we have not left a passion in the field to take up arms against establish'd peace.—*(joining the hands of Valvaise and Adelaide)*—No more your lover, lady, but your father, who thus bestows your hand and blesses ye together.—*(both kneel)*

Val. Such bounty is the mirror of perfection, in which I see my own deformities.

Ade. Thy royal voice has visited mine ears with words so soothing as does from dreams of horror wake my sad soul to more than mortal bliss.

Adol.—*(raising them)*—No more we do command you.—*(to the Countess)*—Madam, embrace your son.

Count.—*(taking them in her arms)*—In blessing these, my children, your

majesty did bless their most contented mother.

Val. Oh, God! it is too much!

Emme.—*(embracing Adelaide)*—To purchase one such moment for my sister, I'd beg from door to door my daily sustenance!

Ade. Thanks, dearest Emmeline.

Adol. Alleran, how comes it, that alone you stand aloof; we give a brother to thee, who holds the golden key of our affections; if thou would'st enter there, be friends with him.

Aller. My liege, I take ye at your royal word.—*(to Valvaise)*—Your hand, sir, if you do not scorn my friendship.

Val.—*(taking his offered hand)*—'Tis what I more do covet than sick men health, or misers to be rich.

Aller.

Aller. With admiration I have scan'd thy worth, thy spirit, liberal principles, and honor; without reluctance I now can call thee brother, and think myself the gainer.

Val. My Adelaide can this be possible?

Ade. The fruits of thine own virtues!

Emme. If I did ere offend thee, Alleran, my heart is penitent.

Aller. No more of that, sweet sister, lest you should call into a soldier's cheek a blush of recollection.

Adol.—(to the Countess)—Madam, I think you have another son, the loveliest youth, 'twixt man and boy, a mother ever boasted.

Count. My lord, I have no other children, save these three present.

[*Adolphus pauses; Emmeline retreats behind Adelaide.*

Emme.—*(aside)*—Shame! shame upon me! Oh, for annihilation, to screen me from reproach!

Adol. No other child! fain would I look upon the face of that fair maid who does attend her sister.

Count. Hear you the king?—Come forward, Emmeline.

Adol. Pardon my boldness, sweet one.—*(removes her veil, impatiently)*—Ha!—*(starts)*

Emme. Oh, spare me, spare me!

Adol.—*(apart to Emmeline)*—Your secret is my own.—*(to the Countess)*—Madam, you have deceiv'd me.

Count. I, my lord !

Adol. It was yourself deceiv'd me. Remember you a pilgrim whose devoirs were offer'd at the shrine of chaste Diana: Bring to your memory that when he did solicit you to tell the fair one's name, you call'd it Adelaide.

Count. When at the ball given by Gonsalvus, to our glorious master, a royal pilgrim deign'd to question me, my gracious liege, with all a mother's pride, I own'd Diana for my Adelaide.

Adol. Methinks your pride might equally have feasted, if you had own'd her for your Emmeline.

Count. With truth, my lord, I could not. An humble shepherdess was Emmeline.

Adol.—*(catching Emmeline in his arms)*—This is my Adelaide!—I love no other!—I never knew another Adelaide.

Count. Oh, blessed mystery!

Emme.—*(withdrawing from the king's embrace)*—I'm cover'd with confusion! Speak, Adelaide.

Ade. Yes, I will speak, nor ought of my offence extenuate; yet, if youth extreme, or small experience, or playfulness of heart, unchastened by the rod of disappointment, may plead excuse, or palliate my fault, to you, my mother, and my prince, I bend for pardon.

Adol. Your prayer is granted.

Ade. Indeed, I meant it harmless, when

when I, with fond persuasion, did prevail on Emmeline, unlicens'd by our mother's privacy, to change her habit with me, Diana she, and I the shepherdess.

Adol. Enough; but with your veil, remove our doubts, if doubts can yet remain.

Ade.—(throwing aside her veil)— Know you this face, my lord?

Adol. Alas! what torments had been spar'd Valvaise if I had seen it ere suspicions wrong'd him.

Val. My generous, gracious master! This blessed hour o'erpays an age of torments!

Adol. Fair Adelaide, next to my Emmeline, the fairest of thy sex, I give you to

to my heart a sister's claim.—*(to Emmeline)*—Here first began my love, here it shall end, here do I fix for ever—*(embracing Emmeline)*

Omnes. Joy! joy!

Aller. Banish reserve, my sister; it seems not grateful to receive such honours with downcast looks and cold indifference.

Emme. On score of coldness or indifference, reproach I merit not. Oh, most beloved Adolphus, had I been free to choose my own condition, I would have ask'd no greater boon of fortune than to have been your faithful slave and servant.

Adol. Our precious queen and mistress!

Val.

Val. Thrice blessed be Adolphus!

Ade. As he has blessed his creatures.

END OF THE PLAY.

CONCLUSION.

THE curtain having dropped, the author now proceeds to close the little history she has ventured to intrude on the public notice, by briefly stating that her hero was once more restored to the bosom of his family; a proof, that under the protection of a generous king, a man, who is a spirited lover of his country, a patriot at heart, may lament the *few* noxious weeds which

which spring, to choak up the richer produce of his native soil, without becoming the victim to the unjust influence of party malice. The Exile, now at the summit of his wishes, felt amply recompenced by a beneficent Providence for those ills which had hitherto clouded his destiny; his heart swelled with pious acknowledgments; he praised his God, he did honour to the commandments of his Maker; blessed in the affections of a wife, who, in the most trying scenes, had displayed tenderness, fortitude, and a strength of abilities almost beyond her sex's exertions. He passed the evening of his life in that beloved country, for whose benefit he would have sacrificed his heart's blood; and highly as he was now connected,

nected, prejudice and detraction no longer ventured to assail his character; the poor adored him; his return amongst them was a triumph to his country, and was hailed by the most enthusiastic marks of satisfaction; even his enemies united to do him justice; his soul was raised above the storm of human passions; gentle, humane, indulgent, to the errors of his fellow creatures, his indignation was excited only by those whose example would inculcate cruelty and oppression. Superior to the casualties of life, he was neither discouraged by adversity, nor rendered insolent by prosperity; distinguished by religion, probity, and benevolence, his days were those of peace, and his ways those of his Maker; while his exulting heart could

could proudly boast that he possessed a daughter who in every action of her spotless life, was a perfect pattern, as a daughter, wife, mother, friend, and sister, she may be equalled but never excelled, thus perfecting the christian character by the addition of its sublimest attribute—the forgiveness of injuries. The youthful Countess of Avenmore enjoyed the blessings she possessed, by rendering herself worthy of them; while his amiable son, not less fortunate then the lovely Rossanna, received the hand of the rich and beautiful Countess of Edgemount, who on her return to England, was reinstated in the large property which devolved to her by her father's death, while Fitzgerald and his amiable wife behold with joyful emotions, the happi-

happiness of their darling child, secured by an union with the son of their beloved friend, and their partner in exile.

As a zealous supporter of his country, her liberties, and her privileges, the Earl of Avenmore is distinguished in the high situation he was called on to fill; and under his mild auspices, tranquillity was restored, and a grateful people venerate his name.

The Marchioness of Desmond for a time continued her career of folly, till some circumstances occurred which opened the eyes of her lord to his blind infatuation of her capricious conduct, and the danger of the society in which she

she mixed; he beheld with sorrow, that in spite of the mild remonstrance of her *true* friends, the art of Lady Berresford had gained completely on his unthinking wife, and trembling at what may be the consequence of such an intimacy to her future peace, and he determined to display the firmness of character, which, to be loved and respected, a husband should never be divested of; with the utmost tenderness, but at the same time in a tone of decision, to which she had hitherto been unaccustomed, remonstrated; for some time conflicting passions assailed her heart; all the pride of woman rushed upon her soul, and, prevented the humiliation of confessing she had been wrong; but after in vain trying

trying every art to regain her so long usurped anthority, she discovered that she loved and respected her lord more than she had ever loved him before, for a firmness of mind she had never witnessed when her wishes were at stake; and after having passed some months in the country, in the society of her family, she once more became the gentle unassuming character for which nature designed her, till prevented by the example of unprincipled and designing people. Her manners now regained their native purity; and her husband saw with transports that the lovely object of his tenderest affection had emerged from the cloud which had for months obscured her brightness, and would again become the *pride* and comfort of an indulgent parent and united family. The birth of a

lovely infant opened to her view the *inexpressible tenderness* of a *mother's* feelings, of a *mother's* love; and as she clasped it in her arms, she felt what would be the agony of *her own* heart, if *ever* a being *so loved, so cherished,* should, by *disobedience or ingratitude,* wound the maternal breast; the awful voice of nature and of truth, is undeniable, as the last summons to eternity; pride, self love, obstinacy, *all fled* at the recollection, that by her *recent* conduct, she had drawn tears of anguish from the eyes of that excellent parent, who had evinced, in every action of her life, the fond solicitude of maternal love; and who could not behold without heart-felt anguish, the errors of a darling child, *once* so highly prized for religion,

duty, and every virtue of the human mind, thus degenerating to a character, *pitied* by a few, as a weak, irresolute, undecided being, and condemned by *all* who had judgment to discriminate the value of that native dignity which ought to be the *seal* of real nobility; but in the pure, and *still* unadulterated *mind* of the fair marchioness, conviction brought repentance; and placing her infant in the arms of the Dowager Countess of Avenmore, the daughter had a convincing proof that neither *disobedience*, *ingratitude*, or *perverseness*, can estrange the affection of a parent's heart from a being idolized from birth; and from this moment Lady Desmond was again the good christian, dutiful child, the fond wife, and tender mother;

indeed, she promised complete amendment, and even proved an exemplary character, the errors of her youth must be placed to their real cause; she was so young, so handsome, so admired, so worshipped, and indulged, that it would have been wonderful if she had escaped unscorched from the fiery ordeal; and who is there that can measure their strength or weakness until they are so tried.

The marquis found a mine of happiness in the future conduct of his lovely wife; and had every reason to congratulate himself that he had, with a proper spirit, broken those bonds asunder which would have destroyed his happiness; and though he was ever the most tender and indul-

gent of husbands, yet he assumed the firmness which ought to characterize a man; and without which it is impossible a sensible woman can properly respect him to whom she is to look up as the protector and supporter of her weakness; and every young creature situated as Lady Desmond was, will, sooner or later, discover that it is better to attend through life to advice of true friends than to the unlimitted praises of the specious flatterer, however gratifying to self-love, may be the offering: yet a distressful truth is often more beneficial than deceitfnl sweetness; since undeserved praise, can give pleasure to none but those who want merit, and undeserved reproach can give pain to none

but

but those who want sincerity; while the good opinion of those we ought to reverence and respect, should be the noblest incitement to duty.

FINIS.

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